



THE INDEPENDENT

Monday 20 October 1997

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What makes Kevin Keegan run ... and run?

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TODAY'S NEWS

Women inhibited by breast-lump fears

Women's reluctance to turn up for check-ups is the biggest cause of delay in treating breast cancer, according to a study of 686 women who attended the breast clinic at a London teaching hospital. Most women have their cancer diagnosed quickly, and are treated quickly; often, it transpires, they don't have cancer at all. Some, however, are so fearful of what their lump might be that they don't go to see the doctor until it's too late. Page 3

How to grow a human

A leading embryologist – Jonathan Slack, of Bath University – has triggered controversy by showing that headless frog embryos can be grown in the laboratory. The technique implies the possibility of growing parts of humans so that organs could be created for transplant: but should it be allowed to happen? Page 3

Greening the market

Long ago it was suggested at the Rio Earth Summit that developed countries should avoid transporting our food across vast distances which could very often be bought from farmers on our own doorstep. In America, so-called 'farmer's markets' have already become common, and popular: here they are just on the point of returning. Page 24

The Mafia lives on

Reports of the death of the Mafia were much exaggerated – or so it now transpires. Our Rome correspondent has found that, while there have been many arrests of mafiosi in recent years, and several convictions, the Cosa Nostra organisation remains wholly intact. Page 7

SEEN & HEARD

Look out at the bird table, and watch those poor starving birds forced to sit by while squirrels invade the garden and eat all their nuts. One company, however, has brought relief. It proposes to defeat the thief rodents by springing a nasty surprise next time they start helping themselves to someone else's food. The application of a finely-ground layer of capsaicin to the bird food gives the squirrels the sensation of eating the fiercest of curries. The birds cannot taste the sharp spice, and much happily on. The squirrels, however, don't even have the option of swilling a lager to cool their mouths down, poor things.

WEATHER The Eye, page 10

TELEVISION The Eye, page 12

CROSSWORDS Page 24 and the Eye, page 9

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Gypsies invade Dover, hoping for a handout



Scores of gypsies from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, including the boy pictured above and his family, have been put into bed-and-breakfast and guest houses on the Kent coast after arriving in Dover at the weekend in the hope of being granted asylum here.

The influx of would-be immigrants, who are claiming racial persecution at home, took local authorities by surprise. They are being put up in bed-and-breakfast hostels in Dover and in a family centre in the town and at a nursing home in Margate. On Friday 13 gypsies arrived by ferry after travelling by coach through Europe; another 32 landed on Saturday and 22 more yesterday.

Gwynn Prosser, Labour MP for Dover, will today meet Mike

O'Brien, the immigration minister, to request assistance. A warning by Roger Gale, Conservative MP for Thanet North, that 3,000 more gypsies were on their way, was condemned as scaremongering by Mr O'Brien yesterday. However, Mr O'Brien acknowledged that further arrivals were inevitable until word filtered back to Slovakia and the Czech Republic that Britain was not a soft option. Some gypsies report having seen a television programme at home which said the British welfare system would support them.

The influx of gypsies began several months ago, but until Friday was just a trickle, comprising about 60 families in total. Of the weekend's arrivals, 36 people were immediately deport-

ed and 28 left voluntarily. Twenty-two others, mainly heads of families, were detained by immigration authorities. "Our resources are being drained quite rapidly," said Terry Birkett, leader of Dover District Council. "Kent cannot bear the full burden of these people."

Mr O'Brien said that each of the cases was being considered individually. He added that asylum had not been granted to any of the gypsies who had arrived in recent months. "We are determined to protect the integrity of the system from abuse, so that we can continue to provide for genuine refugees."

– Kathy Marks

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

City set to punish Brown over EMU confusion

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, last night tried to calm City nerves at the end of a weekend of confusion over British entry to the single European currency. Colin Brown and Nigel Cope look at the Government's biggest test since the election.

The Government will hold its breath today as the financial markets react to uncertain messages over monetary union, 10 years to the day after the stock market crash of 1987.

Gordon Brown was last night forced to intervene as the Government faced its sharpest criticism from senior figures in the City to failing to make clear whether it was ruling out entry for the next five years.

Mr Brown's remarks left open the possibility of Britain joining the second wave, although Government sources continued to make it clear that entry was "highly unlikely" before the next general election.

Brushing aside Tory demands for the recall of Parliament, Mr Brown said on BBC TV: "I can't answer for every newspaper that speculates about the outcome of our deliberations will be ... what I did say all the time before the election is that it's highly unlikely we will join in 1999."

"There are formidable obstacles to this. What was new in my *Times* interview was that we were not going to make the mistakes of the Conservatives over the ERM, where their indecisiveness caused long periods of speculation that were damaging to the national economic interest."

The Chancellor will tell the City today that he will not be "bounced" into giving an early policy statement on Britain's entry into the single currency when he visits

trading floors on the opening of new computer systems for stock market trading.

Without publicly closing the options before a statement in about 10 days to Parliament, he will make it clear that Britain will not join the single currency in the first wave in 1999 because business has not had time to prepare, and the economic cycles of Britain's European partners were not in line.

However, a senior government source said: "You can take it as read we are not going into the first wave. Beyond that, we have to make a judgement. That is what he will be doing in his Commons statement but we have made it clear that is very unlikely."

In the City, commentators said the confusion that had been created by contradictory off-the-record briefings had damaged, perhaps permanently, the government's credibility with the financial markets.

Gerard Lyons, chief economist at Japanese Bank DKB said: "Gordon Brown has gone from Iron Chancellor to Flash Gordon."

Traders face a turbulent day with the markets braced for a volatile session. Most analysts said they expected a fall in share prices and higher long-term interest rates. This assumption follows the sharp rise in the FTSE 100 index of leading shares a few weeks ago when a newspaper report suggested that Britain was likely to adopt for early EMU entry.

Markets are already nervous with today's 10th anniversary of the '87 crash and the start of the new trading system. As Michael Hughes, group economic adviser at investment bank BZW said: "The timing could be better."

Though share prices may come under pressure, some experts said the outlook for taxes would be brighter if Britain does not enter EMU early. Mr Hughes said that if Britain had entered in 1999 then the bud-

gets in 1998 and 1999 would have been extremely tough.

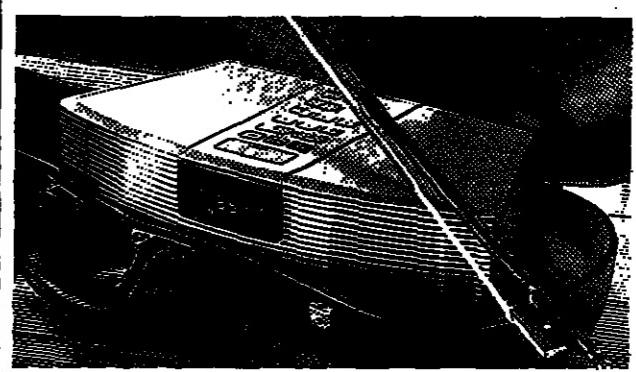
Mr Brown is confident that any slide in stocks today will be shortlived. A senior Cabinet source said the Government was using off-the-record briefings to harden its line, because it wanted to maintain its influence within Europe. Publicly ruling out entry to the single currency for five years could leave Britain out of the key decisions over EMU, when it was about to take over the six-month presidency.

The uncertainty was caused by Mr Brown's interview in the *Times* on Saturday under the headline "Brown rules out single currency for lifetime of this Parliament". His words did not back up the headline, but Treasury spin doctors said they were happy with the message. Confusion in the City was deepened yesterday by Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health, insisting "nothing can be ruled out".

The Independent understands that Mr Dobson was sticking to an agreed Treasury line, leaving open the door to entry in the second wave of the single currency, but it opened the Government to attack by John Redwood and Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, that there was chaos at the heart of Government on its most crucial policy.

"We smell blood in the water, and we may be able to force them off entry," said another senior Tory source.

Tony Blair ordered Mr Brown to harden the line against entry last week, and reverse the momentum which was coming from the Treasury in favour of Britain's membership of EMU, after they discussed the results of a five-month Treasury review showing it could cost a reported £20bn to join, the equivalent of 10p on the standard rate of income tax.



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Stormin' Norman asks a question too far

"It's a bit of a trial being so far ahead of my party that I am called a dinosaur," said Norman Tebbit, adopting his customary air of injured innocence when he was slapped down by William Hague at the Tory Party conference. "Some of my colleagues are still in the pre-Jurassic age."

Now Lord Tebbit is pushing the frontiers of advanced reptilian thinking even further. He has tabled a series of parliamentary questions in the Lords asking the Government for definitions of the word "family". The order paper for the Upper House last week listed the following question against the noble lord's name: "To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their definition of the word 'family' includes two practising sodomites living at the same address."

Then there are another three questions, which ask whether "two lesbian women at the same address" are a family, or "two lesbian women having care or custody of a child living at the same address", or even "two heterosexual males living at the same address".

No doubt this is regarded as a side-splitting stunt in the bars of Chingford. But Lord Tebbit insisted yesterday that he was making a serious point. "Suppose, in the unfortunate event that my wife should pre-decease me, that I went to live with a male chum, and claimed to be in a homosexual relationship. What then?" Would he be able to inherit a council tenancy or gain pension rights?

For many Tories, this is just roguish Norman giving the PC lobby a poke in the eye. But Mr Hague fears that it gives the wrong impression of modern Conservatism. So when Lord Tebbit attacked multiculturalism on the conference fringe earlier this month, he was denounced by Mr Hague's aides for feeding racist instincts. For several days after Mr Hague's denunciation, Lord Tebbit gained easy headlines by repeating what he had said about British cultural identity. Then came the Government's announcement that same-sex partners would have the right to immigrate, although not the same right as married partners. Lord Tebbit wheeled out what was obviously one of his favourite words:

this would "place sodomite marriage on the same standing as the honourable estate of matrimony", he intoned.

But the reason he advanced so far in the Tory party is that he is more than a rent-a-quote bigo. He is a surprisingly engaging and even slightly self-effacing man in private, with a wicked sense of humour – and a tin ear for the sensibilities of the victims of prejudice. He also believes that he understands the true instincts of the electorate.

Now he has surely gone too far, using public money and the time of public servants to answer what are essentially rhetorical questions. And he loses sight of any serious point he might have by asking a fifth question worthy of Bernard Manning: "To ask Her Majesty's Government whether in order to claim the advantages of the status of 'partners', males living at the same address are required to give assurances that they engage in homosexual intercourse."

—John Rentoul

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PEOPLE



Public-school pupil killed in police car chase

A brilliant student was killed on Saturday when his car crashed into the gates of his public school after a high speed police chase.

Julian Elwell, aged 17, was trapped inside his red Fiat Tipo which burst into flames after demolishing a ten-foot stone pillar and part of a stone wall outside his dormitory. Staff at Malvern College, rushed outside and helped police officers put out the flames with fire extinguishers.

But Julian - who was expected to win a place at either Oxford or Cambridge next year - died before firefighters could free him from the wreckage.

West Mercia Police yesterday launched an investigation into the tragedy which occurred after Julian drove off at high speed when he was approached by a policeman in the Worcestershire spa town.

The teenager's car was seen shortly after 9pm on parked outside the Unicorn - a pub popular with young people in Malvern town centre.

But the Fiat drove off when the police panda car pulled up so officers could speak to the driver.

The patrol car, driven by PC Paul Lambourne, pursued the Fiat through Malvern for about a mile back to the college in College Road. "The vehicle ignored a red traffic light and narrowly avoided an accident with another car," said a police spokesman.

"At the time of the accident the vehicle was some 200 metres ahead of the police car. The incident lasted two to three minutes in total. Police officers made

repeated attempts to extinguish the fire and rescue the occupant," the spokesman added.

Fellow pupils who lived with Julian in No. 8 house heard the crash and had to be taken back inside the dormitory in tears by teachers.

"The children are absolutely devastated," said the college registrar, Sheila Jackson. Other pupils at the college were told about Julian's death by headmaster Hugh Carson at a service in the college chapel yesterday morning.

Firefighter Mick Browning said: "I would imagine he hit the wall with some force at some speed. The car snapped across the middle and concertined into itself. It hit the pillar and then catapulted onto its roof before ending up on its side with the driver's door burst open. I think the driver was alive when we got there. We had to use cutting equipment and a powered winch to get the lad out because he was trapped by his legs."

Pupils at the college are not allowed to drink at public houses unless they are 18 and had their housemaster's permission. Chris Lush, 44, licensee of the Unicorn, said: "We liaise closely with the college. Pupils have ID cards and they have to produce them to get served."

West Mercia Police has called in the police complaints authority to investigate the accident and is appealing for witnesses to come forward.

—Richard Smith

McAleese defended after Sinn Fein leak

The Irish Prime Minister, Bertie Ahern, yesterday came to the aid of embattled presidential election candidate Mary McAleese. He forecast that the Belfast-based law professor government nominee – the focal point of a series of leaked government documents about her alleged sympathies towards Sinn Fein – would approach the sensitivities of Northern Ireland "with care and consideration".

He added: "No one has the right to question her Irishness – or her total commitment to peace on this island."

Mr Ahern's ringing endorse-



ment of Ms McAleese's increasingly controversial candidacy followed the mystery circulation to newspapers of official confidential memorandums pointing up her apparent backing for Sinn

Féin. Ms McAleese has strenuously rejected the suggestion, but the effects of the row on her standing as the opinion poll front-runner for the 30 October poll have still to be gauged. Her position was further complicated when the Sinn Fein President, Gerry Adams, signalled his personal backing for her.

Irish foreign minister, David Andrews, whose department is at the centre of the leaking furore, highlighted his government's condemnation of the practice. He declared: "Police investigations will begin immediately. We are determined to get to the bottom of this."

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman 7.30 FOR 8

ZITS



TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.12	Italy (lira)	2,706
Austria (schillings)	19.29	Japan (yen)	191.31
Belgium (francs)	56.97	Malta (lira)	0.61
Canada (\$)	2.17	Netherlands (guilders)	3.11
Cyprus (pounds)	0.81	Norway (kroner)	11.13
Denmark (kroner)	10.58	Portugal (escudos)	279.21
France (francs)	9.26	Spain (pesetas)	252.57
Germany (marks)	2.77	Sweden (kroner)	12.00
Greece (drachmai)	436.42	Switzerland (francs)	2.31
Hong Kong (\$)	12.07	Turkey (lira)	24,615
Ireland (pounds)	1.07	USA (\$)	1.57

Source: Thomas Cook

Rates for indication purposes only

by Chris Priestley

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Drug link to road rage death denied

Events surrounding the death of a couple killed in a road rage incident took a new twist with allegations of a possible drugs link. Toby Exley's family confirmed that he had a drugs conviction, but, as Kathy Marks reports, they believe it played no part in his death.

Toby Exley, who died with his girlfriend, Karen Martin, when their car was rammed into the path of another vehicle, had a conviction for possession of drugs, his family said yesterday.

However, the family said in a statement that it was "disgusted" by allegations in yesterday's newspapers that Mr Exley was a dealer.

"Toby's offence was a one-off mistake," the statement said. He had "no connection with drug warlords or barons", nor had he sold drugs to young people, as alleged.

"Toby was killed, murdered by a raged madman," the family said. "It was not provoked."

The statement was in response to reports yesterday that Mr Exley, 22, had been con-

victed of dealing and could have been targeted by an angry customer. Scotland Yard refused to discuss the reports and said detectives were following numerous lines of enquiry.

Ms Martin's father, John, said that he had known of Mr Exley's conviction, but had been told by police that they were satisfied that there was no link with the incident.

The couple were killed two weeks ago when their Ford Fiesta was forced across the central reservation of the A316, in Hanwell, west London, where it was hit by a Vauxhall Cavalier.

Police are searching for the car that rammed them from behind.

According to the *News of the World*, Mr Exley, from Teddington, Middlesex, was found guilty at Kingston Crown Court last year of possessing Ecstasy, cannabis and amphetamines with intent to supply. He was fined £210 and placed on probation for two years.

The newspaper alleged that he continued to supply drugs and quoted "underworld sources" as saying that he had made enemies by "cutting" the cocaine that he sold. Police have said they believe that Mr Exley's car was hit because the motorist behind was irritated that he was driving too slowly.

Nato military commanders in Bosnia

are warning that urgent action is needed to speed up clearance of an estimated 750,000 mines. The Government has led global action to ban landmines in initiatives that have tied Labour to Diana's legacy. Funds for mine clearance are to be doubled to £10m a year to support projects in the former Yugoslavia as well as Angola, Iraq, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, Laos and Eritrea.

A mines information and training centre is to be set up within the MoD. It will spread British expertise in de-mining operations, training humanitarian organisations such as the Red Cross. There are also plans to give local people expertise to clear mines rather than having to rely solely on overseas aid, which is not always forthcoming. An estimated 100 million mines are scattered in 70 countries worldwide.

Diana legacy lives on in new drive against landmines

George Robertson, the Secretary of State for Defence, is to announce an initiative

tackling the landmine scourge. Following in the footsteps of Diana, Princess of Wales, he is to unveil the moves tomorrow in the Bosnian city of Mostar, scene

of some of the bloodiest fighting in the civil war.

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How Cosa Nostra's cunning outfoxed the Italian state

Despite the arrest of a succession of Mafia bosses, evidence suggests their criminal network has not been damaged. Andrew Gumbel in Rome reports on how the gangs are poisoning the state's efforts to combat organised crime.

Back in January 1993, Balduccio Di Maggio looked like a godsend to Italy's anti-Mafia investigators. Picked up on minor charges in the northern city of Novara, he soon admitted to being a "man of honour", a member of Cosa Nostra and led the police to the biggest boss of them all, the Corleonesi clan chief Toto Riina, whom he had served as a driver and dogbody.

On top of that, Di Maggio told investigators about a secret meeting he had witnessed six years earlier between Riina and Giulio Andreotti, the grand old man of Italian politics at which the two men exchanged a kiss. Mr Andreotti, who had recently finished his seventh stint as prime minister, was placed under investigation for collusion with the Mafia and forced to undergo a trial that is still in progress.

Why had Di Maggio turned state's evidence so willingly? At the time, newspapers suggested he had been disgusted by Riina's murderous leadership, or had been ostracised by the traditionalist *Cosa Nostra* bosses because he had left his wife for his mistress.

Now, a more sinister theory is emerging in the Palermo Palace of Justice: Di Maggio, unwittingly or not, was manipulated by another senior member of the Corleonesi clan,

Bernardo Provenzano; and his aim was not to have Cosa Nostra dismantled but to take it over for himself.

Instead of declaring open warfare against the state, as Riina did by assassinating prominent anti-Mafia magistrates, Provenzano's strategy has been – according to the Palermo prosecutors – to infiltrate the state and poison the system from within.

His main weapon, it appears, has been men like Di Maggio, whose evidence against their former bosses has been the bedrock of the anti-Mafia drive over the past five years. Various political figures – such as Mr Andreotti – have sought to denigrate the value of these Mafia turncoats or *pentiti* as they are known, arguing they are criminals whose evidence cannot be trusted.

Their line of argument received an unexpected boost last week when Di Maggio, who enjoys the benefits of a witness protection scheme along with his family, was thrown back into jail and accused of masterminding a series of recent murders in Sicily.

The reaction of Mr Andreotti and his sympathisers was to crow: we told you so, they said, men like him can never change. Mr Andreotti then demanded his own immediate acquittal. But the Palermo prosecutors said Di Maggio was not just an unrepentant criminal but part of a strategy aimed at throwing the whole anti-Mafia effort into confusion.

"Highly refined minds have been following a sophisticated plan," warned the deputy chief prosecutor of Palermo, Guido Lo Forte. "On the one hand they have made use of Balduccio Di Maggio to eliminate the dead wood of the organisation; on the other, they have

destabilised the system by discrediting those collaborating with the justice authorities."

All of a sudden, the events of the past four years have been thrown into a new light. According to the latest evidence, Provenzano has woven an intricate web of contacts within the police and state institutions – creating a *pax mafiosa* whereby he can carry on his drugs and arms smuggling activities unmolested while the state prides itself on "winning" the war against the Corleonesi.

The greatest danger now is the unravelling of the "pentiti" system. This has been the key to all state assaults on the Mafia, but has also been widely misunderstood – partly because the word *pentito* in Italian (literally, "repentant one") conjures up images of sin and redemption. In fact, magistrates have never treated their witnesses as anything other than criminals who can be persuaded to reveal information for reasons of strict self-interest.

Mr Lo Forte points out that Di Maggio's recent killing spree does not invalidate his earlier revelations. But such considerations are difficult for public opinion to accept, and even more difficult to put to the political elite. Ever since the political corruption scandals of the early 1990s, plenty of deputies have had good reason to dislike a justice system that relies on small fish turning state's evidence against bigger culprits.

A special parliamentary committee is about to consider changes to the way justice is administered, and key elements of the anti-Mafia effort are high on the agenda. The timing of Prosecutor Lo Forte's warning may be a deliberate attempt to alert parliament to the fact that the Mafia may gain most from these changes.



Behind bars: Toto Riina in court in Rome in 1993. The Mafia organisation has flourished without him. Photograph: AP

TRAIL OF BLOOD AND BETRAYAL

The war against the Sicilian Mafia has taken a series of dramatic turns since the early 1990s. Hundreds of informants have come forward and dozens of high-profile arrests have been made, but still the criminal apparatus survives.

Here are some key dates of the past few years:

May 1992 – Giovanni Falcone, the anti-Mafia magistrate, is blown up along with his wife and three bodyguards outside Palermo. Two months later, his close colleague Paolo Borsellino is killed in a car bomb outside his home.

January 1993 – Balduccio Di Maggio arrested in Novara. A week later, the head of the Corleonesi clan, Toto Riina, is arrested in Palermo.

May 1993 – Mafia bombs destroy the Roman church of San Giorgio Velabro and severely damage the Uffizi museum in Florence.

June 1995 – Riina's lieutenant, Leoluca Bagarella, arrested after a short car chase in Palermo. He joins a long list of defendants in the rapidly assembled Falcone murder trial.

September 1995 – Giulio Andreotti goes on trial on charges of criminal collusion with the Mafia in the 1970s and 1980s.

May 1996 – Giovanni Brusca, the Mafia's most notorious killer, is arrested. Over the next few months he begins collaborating with the state, although his evidence is contradictory and misleading at first.

June 1997 – The brains of the Corleonesi clan, Pietro Aglieri, arrested. Only one big boss, Bernardo Provenzano, remains at large.

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Rabbi calls for end to Holocaust memorial day

Desire to commemorate the Holocaust is so acute that Jews have a special day set aside on which to do so. A leading rabbi fears that the day will eventually go by the board. But, as Clive Gammie discovered, his proposed alternative did not go down well.

A leading Reform rabbi yesterday suggested that, after the millennium, British Jews should abandon their special day commemorating the Holocaust and amalgamate it with their general day of mourning.

In a lecture, entitled: "A time to be courageous and live dangerously," at the Festival of Reform Judaism, Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain, of Maidenhead Synagogue, in Berkshire, argued that the Holocaust should be commemorated as the

latest in a series of Jewish disasters rather than a unique event in its own right.

At present, Jews observe Yom HaShoah, a special day officially established by the Israeli parliament in 1951 and informally built into the Jewish religious calendar to commemorate the Holocaust. Since 400BC, all Jews have observed Tishah B'Av, a day of mourning for the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem. The latter has also been used to commemorate later tragedies such as the massacre in York in 1190 and the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492.

Rabbi Romain, the son of a Holocaust survivor, argued that since previous generations had added liturgies and elegies to the Tishah B'Av service, this generation should incorporate the Holocaust. "Tishah B'Av has almost become a magnet for black events in Jewish history, a repository of mourning. Although the Holocaust is a modern black event, it is just yet another

in that long, black list." He said he feared that the special Holocaust memorial day would not stand the test of time. "One gets such small turnouts at the Armistice parade. Very few people stand to attention at 11am. Unfortunately, I think the same sort of thing is going to happen with the Holocaust."

William D Rubinstein, professor of history at the University of Wales and author of *The Myth of Rescue*, believes that any move to make the Holocaust part of a wider memorial day would be unpopular with Jews. "The Holocaust was such a traumatic, central event in modern Jewish history that if anything there is more of a desire to commemorate it, not less. It's more real to modern people than events of biblical times."

Rabbi Tony Bayfield, chief executive of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, said: "As far as the Reform Movement ... is concerned, the issue is not tabled as one for discussion. We will continue to mark the Shoah (Holocaust) on a special day."



Homing in: Pigeon fancier Ernie Lee at home in Manchester with his birds - minus his prize racer, Houdini, who got lost on the way home from Cheltenham and ended up 5,000 miles away in Senegal! Photograph: News Team

Second strike at Barclays

Barclays bank workers stage their second 24-hour strike today in protest at a new performance-related pay scheme. Thousands of members of the Banking Insurance and Finance Union (BIFU) and UNIFI walked out on Friday. Barclays maintained that 90 per cent of its staff worked normally, but the unions claimed 80 per cent of the 2,000 branches were closed or disrupted.

Lottery jackpot winners

Four tickets shared Saturday night's £8.5m lottery jackpot. The winning numbers were: 4, 28, 46, 9, 32, 25. Bonus number:

DAILY POEM

"The Way I read a Letter's this"

By Emily Dickinson

*The Way I read a Letter's - this -
Tis first - I lock the Door -
And push it with my fingers - next -
For transport it be sure -*

*And then I go the furthest off
To counteract a knock -
Then draw my little Letter forth
And slowly pick the lock -*

*Then - glancing narrow, at the Wall -
And narrow at the floor
For firm Conviction of a Mouse
Not exorcised before -*

*Peruse how infinite I am
To no one that You - know -
And sigh for lack of Heaven - but not
The Heaven God bestow*

This week's poems come from *Poets on Poets*, edited by Nick Rennison and Michael Schmidt (£9.95). In this 400-page anthology, produced by Carcanet Press in association with Waterstone's, almost 100 modern poets select and present work from poets of the past. Emily Dickinson is introduced by Alison Brackenbury.

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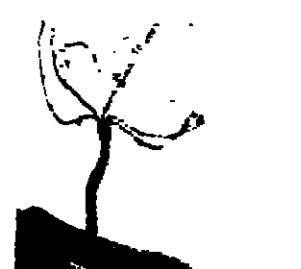
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Cabare
dash of
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A display of Nineties decadence and a lament for old English identity made contrasting to the Gloucestershire dialect witnessed by the News Editor.



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Cabaret adds dash of decadence to feast of words

A display of Nineties decadence and a lament for lost English identity made contrasting climaxes to the Gloucestershire festival, witnessed by David Lister, Arts News Editor.

A three-hour-long Decadence Cabaret at Cheltenham town hall saw readings and playlets from the racier side of British fiction. There were prose readings from Will Self, a play about Oscar Wilde, a "decadent cookbook" and even "decadent conjuring".

And the poet Fiona Pitt-Kethley recited verse about her experiences dressing up as a man to tour brothels and sex clubs in the East. "I couldn't do much, but it was fascinating to see who I would have fancied had I been a man," she said. "Everyone should try cross dressing at least once. The whole experience is different - just, for example, the way you are treated in the street."

The festival director, John Walsh, said decadence tended to rear its head at the *fin de siècle*, both in this century and the last. Yet by contrast, down the road at the

CHELTENHAM LITERARY FESTIVAL SPONSORED BY THE INDEPENDENT

Everyman Theatre, Melvyn Bragg in the Festival Lecture was advocating a very different set of values.

Bragg sounded most unlike a prominent left-leaning media figure and unlike most of his fellow novelists on the London literary scene - at one point he reminded his audience that British soldiers had been feared the world over since the 12th century. Arguing in an intriguing lecture that the historical novel had been too long neglected by the literati, he said it helped us as a nation rediscover our identity, an identity which had been battered because we had been strongly ashamed of our past. We were embarrassed and confused, he said, drawing parallels between 20th century discomfort with the historical novel and late 20th century unease with our own history and identity.

Bragg, a writer of historical novels as well as presenter of LWT's *The South Bank Show* and BBC Radio 4's *Start The Week*, told his audience at Cheltenham's Everyman Theatre: "English history recently has usually been recorded as a matter of shame and dishonour. But history, English history, can reinvigorate fiction and help us to make sense of the past."

In the last 50 years, he said, historical novels had been seen as a downmarket genre "with Georgette Heyer instead of Dickens, Catherine Cookson instead of Hardy". But now there was a resurgence with the likes of Rose Tremain, Pat Barker, Barry Unsworth and AS Byatt writing



Racy recipes: Medlar Lucan demonstrating the art of decadent cooking at the Decadence Cabaret in Cheltenham town hall on Saturday night

Photograph: Rob Stratton

within the genre. "So they have come back," said Bragg. "Is there anything in the air or is it just a little splutter at the end of a tradition?"

He went on: "There might be a connection between the state of the country and the state of the novel. We all show the mantra of the decline of Britain, and end of Empire, end of British domination of the English language and political break-up at the United Kingdom,

There's a great sense in our country that we are looking to our enormous past to see what bits we are going to use, what we are going to build on. Not so much who we are, but who were we and more importantly who do we want to be. That accounts for the burst of serious writers in the last 10 or 15 years taking up the genre.

"Also I think a lot of people of my generation ... are realising that we have been on a strange historical journey. I'm 58. I was

brought up in a little town that was much more like a Victorian town it is today ... In 1946 I still dealt in farthings as my grandfather did. Money wasn't all that different. Now it's gone out of all proportion.

"When I was a child I was surrounded by people who were innocent, who had satisfaction with their lot and had humility. I haven't encouraged that since I went to London."

British stars win all roles

The production company behind *The English Patient* is backing a new "British" film. And, as David Lister reports, it seems that British talent has beaten off Hollywood opposition.

The British actress Jane Horrocks, best known for playing dippy secretary Bubble in the BBC's *Absolutely Fabulous* series, appears to have beaten off the claims of Hollywood star Gwyneth Paltrow, and will recreate her most famous stage role for the screen.

Shooting starts today in Scarborough on *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, based on Jim Cartwright's West End comedy. It is being financed by Miramax, the American independent production company which was behind the Oscar-winning movie *The English Patient*, and is jointly produced with British company Scala Films.

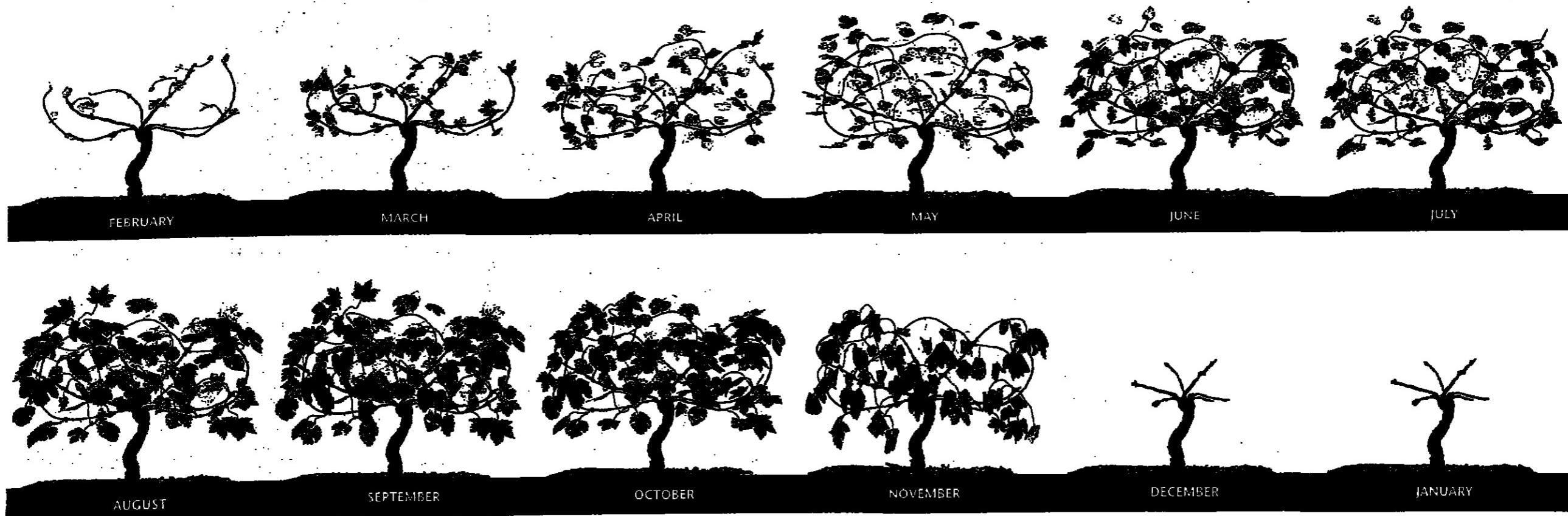
Last year the project was at the heart of trans-Atlantic crossfire, when it emerged that Gwyneth Paltrow, star of *Emma* and *Seven*, was also being touted to play the working-class Yorkshire girl with an astonishing gift for impersonation.

However, the British have won the day. When shooting begins today Horrocks will play "Little Voice", Brenda Blethyn, star of Mike Lee's *Secrets and Lies*, will play her overbearing mother - a role also at one time likely to go to an American - and Michael Caine, Ewan McGregor and Jim Broadbent will co-star in an all-British cast. The director is Mark Herman, who directed *Brassed Off*, the story of a colliery brass band.

No one at Miramax would discuss what casting negotiations had taken place, but sources say it was felt that the story of a back-street Cinderella in a bleak British seaside town would have seemed curious played by Hollywood superstars.

The story centres on a shy and quirky young woman who never goes out of the house. In her bedroom she repeatedly plays vintage records and perfects vocal imitations of Judy Garland, Marlene Dietrich, Marilyn Monroe and Shirley Bassey. A small-time agent hears about her and tries to make his and her fortune. The West End show also included Horrocks doing imitations of Cilla Black, which might also have founded a Hollywood cast and audience.

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Learning to listen: Leeds primary school children take a coffee break during counselling training at the Stakis Hotel. Teachers believe the scheme is enjoyable, as well as helping pupils to gain confidence and learn to respect each other

Photograph: Joan Russell/Guzelian

A shoulder to cry on, aged 10

Children as young as ten are being trained to listen to the worries of seven- and eight-year-old fellow pupils. Esther Leach visited one of the Leeds primary schools conducting an unusual experiment.

It gives child psychology a new meaning. "Peer support" lessons are used to help 10-year-olds develop skills in listening and giving support to younger children who may be worried about making friends, their school work or getting on with their parents.

Adrienne Harker, head of one of four primary schools taking part in the £5,000 scheme in Leeds, said the children chosen for training had already shown signs of having the necessary skills.

She added: "Parents have told us how pleased they are that their children have been chosen to help other children."

"There is no question that they will become over burdened with the worries of the children they are trying to help because we, the teachers, will always be there in the background." Groups of up to six children will meet without a teacher for 20 minutes a week over 10 weeks to discuss anything bothering them.

"If it's something very serious then we will go to a teacher for help. We have learnt how important it is to keep a confidence but if it is serious then we will go to a teacher."

Mark Mitchings, 10, said he expected to carry on giving help when he moved up to high school where peer counselling already goes on.

"I don't think I'd give it up as I got older for the sake of

other things. It's a good thing to learn how to talk and listen to other people and I'll be learning all that while I'm helping other children."

"I think if someone told me they were smoking or drinking just because their parents did it, I'd tell them it was bad for them and that they ought to tell their parents it is bad for them too."

Training co-ordinator Dave Weetman said peer support went on in many high schools but this was the first scheme among primary school children. "This can work as an anti-bullying measure - a chance for children to talk out anything in a non-threatening way."

"And they are having fun

too, as well as gaining confidence and learning to respect each other."

Mr Weetman said the idea emerged during discussions among the Seacroft-Manston Family of Schools in East Leeds, which is made up of a number of schools that work together and share resources.

Help in devising the training programme, during which children are taught the importance of eye contact and listening attentively, came from the CCDU Training Research and Consultancy Group based at Leeds University.

Peer support lessons are expected to start in the four primary schools after half-term.

Hollywood stirs a revolution in the history department

Scottish history is booming in Scottish universities in the wake of the film *Braveheart*, which showed the country's medieval struggles against the English. Judith Judd, Education Editor, looks at the reasons for the revival.

William Wallace and Robert Bruce are now attracting more students than the French Revolution. At Stirling, the history department is putting on two instead of one first-year courses in Scottish history.

Numbers on a first-year Scottish history course offered at Aberdeen university are up this year from 70 to 120. Glasgow's growing numbers, almost double since the beginning of the decade, include large numbers of mature students. Stirling has recently added two Scottish history specialists to cope with the demand.

The revival is not confined to history. Scottish literature departments are also pulling in more students than ever before. At Edinburgh university, first and second-year courses, which would have attracted only 40 or so students 10 years ago, are this year catering for 200. There is also a new Scottish literature component which forms part of the honours degree programme.

At Strathclyde, there are 80 in the first-year Scottish literature course compared with 44 last year. There is also a new part-time postgraduate diploma for teachers. Students at both universities study the whole range of Scottish literature, from Dunbar and Henryson to modern writers such as Ian Crichton-Smith, William McIlvanney and Alison Kennedy.

The enthusiasm for Scottish history and

were on politically divergent paths.

There was a feeling that you couldn't do much politi-

cally but you could do something cul-

turally."

Dr Simpson also sees the role of the Thatcher government in alienating Scots as one key to the cultural revival which has marched hand in hand with nationalism. Several academics believe that the recent vote in favour of devolution and the latest developments in universities are a sign that the Scots have come of age. Dr Fiona Watson, a lecturer in history at Stirling, said:



Hollywood hero: Scots want to see beyond the *Braveheart* myth

"Instead of just going on about the *Braveheart* myth people want to find out what it was really like. It is a sign of a mature society." Dr Simpson said that there was a new sense of internationalism, that Scotland was a small nation within Europe. "Scots are beginning to discover links between Scotland and Europe which go back to the Middle Ages."



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US women war veterans finally have their day

Some 30,000 turned out in Washington at the weekend to help inaugurate the Women in Military Service for America Memorial. As Mary Dejevsky reports, everyone agrees the memorial is late, but how late is a matter of opinion.

"At long last," said the *Washington Post* – whose uneasy role as Washington's local and the country's national newspaper was entirely appropriate to this occasion – "the women who served receive recognition." No one can say, either, that the recognition is grudging.

Standing at the very entrance to the Arlington National Cemetery, it incorporates an exhibition gallery, theatre and an education centre, all designed to illustrate the contribution of America's women to war. The complex – which has something of a sprawling hacienda, something, with its vast reflecting

pool, of a huge mosque – cost more than \$20m, all of it raised by voluntary contributions.

Partly, it seems, to make up for lost time, partly not to offend anyone, the memorial is all-encompassing. It commemorates women who served their country not just in the two world wars of this century and the subsequent wars – Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf – in which Americans fought, but all wars, from the American Revolution onwards. It celebrates all women – an estimated 1.8 billion – who wore a uniform, whether they made the tea or navigated a plane.

Looking at the happy faces of those present at Saturday's ceremony, from fresh-faced young air force recruits to women veterans in their nineties, no one would have been churlish enough to question any aspect of the monument, particularly not its purpose.

Architecturally, it received a flattering press, which contrasted with the distinctly mixed reviews of the last – and considerably more striking –

memorial to be opened in Washington: the Roosevelt monument that opened earlier this year.

Some visitors wore T-shirts saying "We also served".

Young women were quoted as saying that it encouraged them to consider a military career, and Vice-President Al Gore was sent to say: "Thank you,

thank you, for what you have done."

Even as the monument opened, however, it felt already just a little dated. Ten years ago, it would have been in harmony with American feminism at its most ebullient; five years ago it could have celebrated the opening of equal opportunities for women in the forces, even to combat roles. Now, however, the women's movement is quietly retrenching. One consequence of equal opportunities in the armed forces has been a series of lurid sexual harassment cases and the asking of some hard questions about the effects of "mixed" training.

The new monument may

tell the next generation of women what their "mammy did in the war", but it may also turn out to be a monument frozen in time. If the US fights another war, its servicewomen will need no separate commemoration. Their casualties will be ranged alongside the men, in military cemeteries across America.

A woman's place: Second World War veteran Norine Russel joins the celebrations on Saturday

Photograph: AFP

Fury at Kohl's vow to stay until 2002

Chancellor Helmut Kohl faced a fresh barrage of dissent from the ranks of his Christian Democrats (CDU) yesterday over his pledge to rule Germany until 2002 if he wins next year's general election.

In an impromptu announcement last week, Mr Kohl, 67, who had already said he intended to stand for a record fifth term in the September 1998 poll, quashed speculation he might step down in mid-term, saying he would serve all four years.

Mr Kohl has already become Germany's longest serving chancellor this century by leading his centre-right coalition government since 1982.

Staying until 2002 would take him past the 19 years that "Iron Chancellor" Otto von Bismarck served in the last century without having to face the inconvenience of elections.

The CDU deputy parliamentary leader, Heiner Geissler, welcomed Mr Kohl's public anointment of long-time heir apparent Wolfgang Schäuble. But he criticised Mr Kohl's intention to cling on to power for another five years.

Speculation about a grand coalition was prompted after Mr Kohl announced Schäuble would be his successor last week.

Mr Schäuble, confined to a wheelchair since a 1990 assassination attempt when a deranged man shot him, has toyed with the idea of such an alliance in the past. — Reuters, Bonn

known as the "Young Wild Bunch" chimed in, reiterating their demand for Mr Kohl to step aside earlier to make way for fresh blood at the top.

Mr Kohl, often dubbed the "eternal chancellor", told ZDF television in Germany he was convinced his whole election team had a winning ticket. He dismissed speculation that the CDU might form a grand coalition with the opposition Social Democrats if its junior partners, the Free Democrats (FDP), fail to gain at least 5 per cent of the votes, as required under election rules, to return to the Bonn parliament, as predicted by polls.

"I will not form a grand coalition. I do not predict this to be the (election) result," Mr Kohl said, adding that this was also the view of Mr Schäuble, who is the CDU's parliamentary group leader in Bonn.

Speculation about a grand coalition was prompted after Mr Kohl announced Schäuble would be his successor last week.

Mr Schäuble, confined to a wheelchair since a 1990 assassination attempt when a deranged man shot him, has toyed with the idea of such an alliance in the past. — Reuters, Bonn

Hamas chief calls for unity in war with Israel

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the founder of the militant Muslim organisation Hamas, appealed to all Palestinians yesterday to join ranks and direct their hostility at Israel.

"We insist that our people will remain unified in facing the American and Israeli conspiracies that want us to kill each other," he told Palestinian lawmakers at the Legislative Council headquarters in Gaza. "We will not transform our battle to an internal battle."

"We will be unified with the Palestinian National Authority ... even if we were repressed by our brothers, we will not face repression with repression."

"We will not direct our hostility towards the Authority because our hostility is only directed towards the one enemy which has seized our land and killed our women, children and elderly."

Hamas, which opposes the peace deals the Palestinian president Yasser Arafat has made with Israel, has killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings.

Last month the Palestinian Authority, under pressure from Israel and the United States, arrested Hamas activists and closed 16 of its charity and educational institutions.

Sheikh Yassin was released from an Israeli jail earlier this month as part of a prisoner swap with Jordan after a bungled attempt by Israeli intelligence agents to assassinate Khaled Meshal, a Hamas leader in Amman. Sheikh Yassin, arrested in 1989, was serving a life sentence in Israeli jails.

He was quoted as saying at the weekend: "Israel, as the Jewish state, must disappear from the map."

"We are now weak but in the

future we will be strong. They [Israel] are today strong but in the future they will be weak."

The cleric said Hamas would continue fighting Israel until it ended its occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including Arab East Jerusalem – all land where he says Palestinians want to set up an independent state.

● A roadside bomb blast yesterday killed two Lebanese who were travelling in a car near Jezzine, an area controlled by the pro-Israeli South Lebanon Army (SLA). Israeli security sources said.

According to initial reports the two in the car were Lebanese civilians or SLA members.

On Saturday, Hizbullah guerrillas killed an Israeli soldier when they fired on a tank at the edge of Israel's 9-mile-wide occupation zone in south Lebanon.

Smears mar election in Montenegro

Montenegrins voted yesterday at the end of a presidential election campaign in which the Yugoslav republic's two top political leaders smeared each other with accusations of massive corruption.

The early turnout was heavy, after an indecisive first round two weeks ago when the outgoing President, Momir Bulatovic, edged reformist Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic, by just 2,500 votes.

Mr Bulatovic's strong showing surprised Mr Djukanovic, who had expected to cruise to victory after sidelining his former ally and taking control of the state apparatus during a year of political infighting.

Diplomats said the credibility of both men had been badly damaged by corruption charges, involving millions of dollars.

The criminal issue, which Bulatovic also exploited during the first round, struck a chord with voters who saw a class of new rich emerge during the black market era that flourished during UN sanctions against Yugoslavia.

The corruption dispute overshadowed the political stakes between Mr Bulatovic, the candidate of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, and Mr Djukanovic who has led a drive to liberalise the republic's economy.

Solidarity agrees deal

Poland's Solidarity-led AWS bloc and the smaller Freedom Union (UW) party agreed yesterday on the share-out of government posts, moving closer to a final coalition deal after weeks of talks, a senior UW leader said.

Tadeusz Syryczech said a coalition agreement setting common policy goals and spelling out the share-out of government positions could be signed later.

On Friday the two partners clinched a deal, which allowed President Aleksander Kwasniewski to designate prime minister Jerzy Buzek, a 57-year-old academic, as a joint candidate of the AWS and the Freedom Union.

Lisbon subway fire kills two

A fire in the Lisbon subway last night killed two and caused major damage to the track and a station, officials said. The subway was closed at the time.

Rescue services found the dead bodies of a security guard and a station chief who were on duty below ground at the time of the blaze, the fire chief Jose Lameirinha said. Neither of the men was named. About 60 firemen wearing oxygen masks fought the blaze, which broke out after the subway system had shut down for the night.

Pope honours St Therese

The Pope bestowed one of the Catholic Church's highest honours yesterday on St Therese of Lisieux, the 19th-century French nun known as the "Little Flower".

In an elaborate ceremony in St Peter's Square, the pontiff made her a doctor of the church, a title given to selected saints whose writings or teachings are considered to have outstanding merit. A huge, flower-decked portrait of St Therese, who died of tuberculosis in 1897 aged 24 and was canonised just 28 years later, hung in the square. Therese ended her short life in the convent in Lisieux. "I did not think it was possible to suffer so much," she said toward the end.

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13/KIDNAPPING

Yemen abduction threatens to ruin leader's tour of West

The Yemeni government yesterday sealed off the area where kidnapped Briton Henry Thompson is being held. Patrick Cockburn in Sanaa reports on the fury over what officials see as a politically motivated act.

Tribesmen kidnapped Henry Thompson, a Briton conducting research work for the Japan International Cooperation Agency, as he drove north along the main road linking Sanaa to the south of the country.

The kidnappers, belonging to the Bani Zafyan tribe, then took him 70 miles east to their stronghold south of the city of Marib. Yesterday, the government said it had sealed off the area with about 100 soldiers, though in practice thousands of troops would be needed for the government to assert its authority in a region which is under tribal control.

The Yemeni Interior Ministry, which is trying to mediate Mr Thompson's release, has received a letter from him in which he says he is being "well treated, well fed and comfortable". He added that the tribesmen had kidnapped him and his Yemeni translator because they want a better water supply, a clinic and an improved road to their district.

More than 30 foreigners, mainly Italian, French and German tourists, have been kidnapped in Yemen this year. But Mr Thompson is the first Briton to be abducted for several years. All the others were released unharmed.

In seeking Mr Thompson's release the Yemeni government appears to be following its usual practice of arresting any

members of the tribe it can lay its hands on and sealing off the area's few main roads.

There were already signs of this happening at the weekend on the road from Sanaa to Marib. We passed through one army checkpoint after much argument and a suggestion from the soldiers that we get the police to act as bodyguards. But at a second checkpoint, on the road to Jihana, one of Yemen's main gun markets, and not far from where Mr Thompson is held, the officer in charge refused to let us pass. When we asked for two soldiers as guards he said there would not be enough.

He had about 40 men guarding his post as well as two pick-up trucks with heavy machine guns in the back. "There are many problems beyond here between the government and the tribes. Perhaps you will get hijacked," he said.

In Sanaa, the Ministry of Information, which had previously said we could visit any part of Yemen, refused a permit even to visit Jihana, though this used to be on many tourist itineraries.

Yemen is angry about the Thompson case because Ali Abdullah Saleh, the Yemeni president, is to pay his first official visit to Britain on 11 November. Dr Abdul Karim al-Eryani, the Foreign Minister, told *The Independent* yesterday that the kidnapping of Mr Thompson was politically motivated. "The social grievances are camouflage," he said. "I have never heard of anybody demanding development aid for their region through kidnapping."

Most Yemeni officials believe that the abductions are orchestrated by the Yemeni opposition, which is funded by outside powers. In 1994 Yemen was the scene of a civil war when the south, supported by Saudi Arabia, tried to secede.



Men of the desert: Tribesmen in Yemen have made a habit of kidnapping Westerners, mainly tourists, but until now they have all been released unharmed. Photograph: Camera Press

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The man who never put both feet wrong



DEBORAH ROSS
TALKS TO
KEVIN KEEGAN

How big a legend can a small footballer be?
Pretty big, especially if he chooses Liverpool and Newcastle as playing turf. They're daffier about soccer there than anywhere else. So then why would he leave? And what would make him sign up with Fulham and start all over again?

A lot of people can be quite smirky about Kevin Keegan. He's had some rubbish hairdos in his time, they say. He made it to Liverpool and England, yes, but was never truly a great player. Anyone could have done what he did at Newcastle with that sort of money. If he does the same at Fulham, it'll only be because of Mohammed Al Fayed's got lots. He was England's first football millionaire and is as much interested in marketing himself as he is in the game. Certainly, he is still at this last. I must, he tells me, buy my son The Kevin Keegan Soccer Kit for Christmas. "You can get it at Sports Division, who've just taken over Olympus. It'll cost you around £30, but it comes in a good-quality bag which you can later use when you go shopping."

However, as far as the public go, he seems to be pretty much untouchable. An icon, even. Last Thursday I had gone to Westminster Central Hall to see him take questions from an audience while simultaneously promoting his just published autobiography - the unimaginatively titled *Kevin Keegan: My Autobiography*. The place was packed to capacity. At least 1,000 people, I would say. The evening was meant to finish at 9pm but Kevin had to stay until midnight signing copies of his book. The queue went out the half, down the grand staircase and into the street.

I find him quite charismatic. He is very open and, maybe even, a good deal wiser than most footballers. He has never really come a cropper, not even in his personal life. He's never fallen out of nightclubs at dawn or dated popstars. He has been married to Jean, his

teenage sweetheart, for as long as anyone can remember. No, he doesn't wish he was a footballer today just so he could date a Posh or Ulrika and Danni. Although, that said, he was seated between Ulrika and Danni at an awards do recently. And? Could you have scored if you'd have wanted to, so to speak? "No, I don't think so. They like big centre forwards. I'm just not their type."

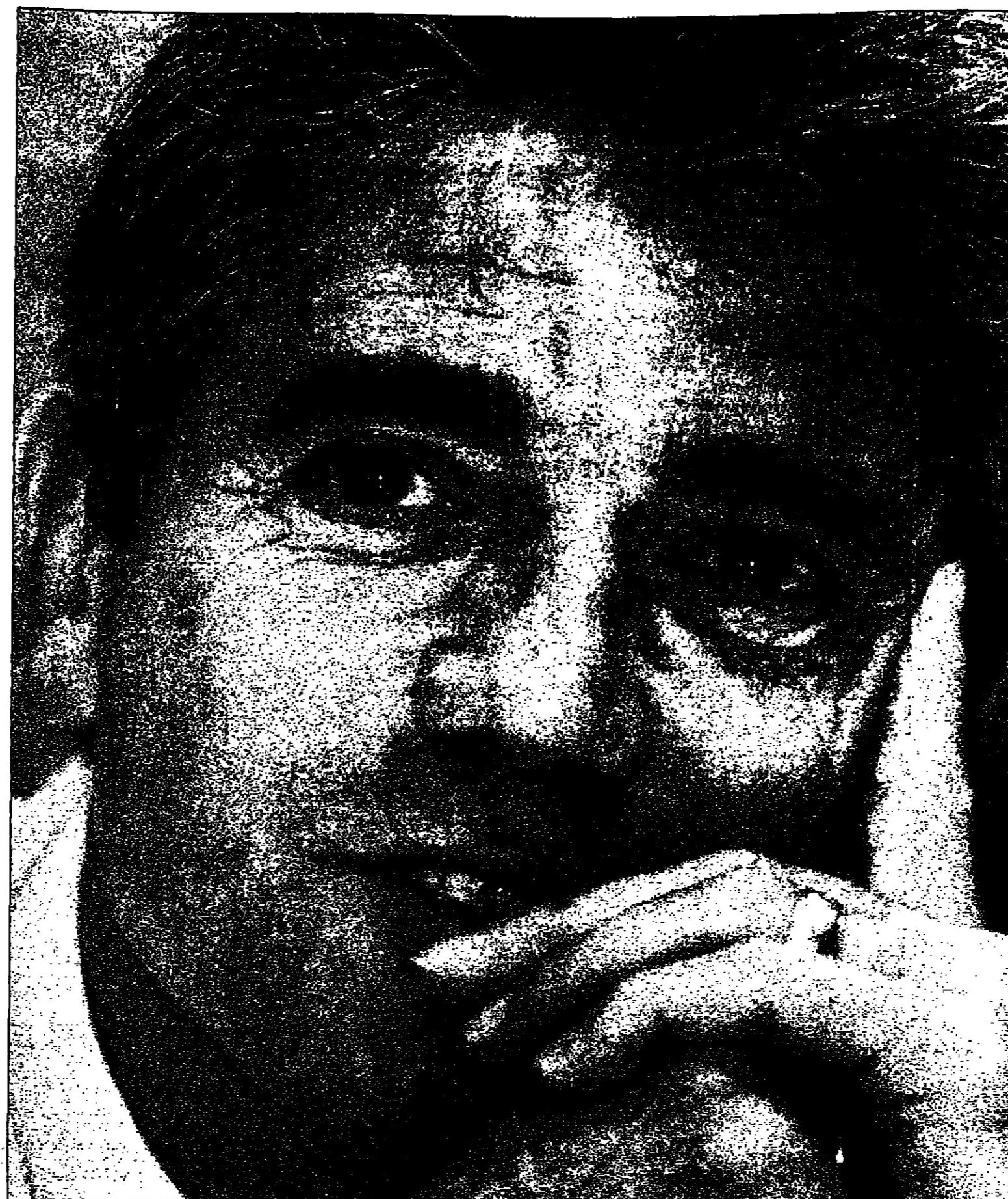
Certainly, he is really quite dashing, with that dimpled chin and the very thick, now silver hair which may be naturally bouffant but then again may have been blow-dried. Whatever, it's a vast improvement on that perm. What was he thinking of there? Well, he says, long hair was fashionable in the Seventies and he couldn't be bothered with all the blow-drying after showers so that's why he had it. He then adds that the first time Jean saw it "she made me go to the bathroom and dampen it down." But, still, you kept on having perms, didn't you? "Yes, because once you start it is very difficult to stop. Terry Mac's still having them. We can't wean him off. We call him Don King."

Terry Mac is Terry McDermott, his former Liverpool team-mate who he brought along as his assistant when he joined Newcastle as manager. Everyone laughed at them, he says. "Here I was, a bloke who'd been playing golf in Marbella for eight years and here was Terry, a bloke who'd been selling hamburgers at race courses for nine years."

Of course, the more Kevin was goaded the more he was determined. I think this is what makes him tick, actually. Indeed, I reckon he is actually more excited by endeavour and overcoming odds than he is in actual achievement, which is probably just as well at the moment because he is not playing for Liverpool or England or being hampered at race courses for nine years."

I think this very unkind and short-sighted of him, particularly as I'd got up especially early to do my warm-up exercises and am known to be good in goal so long as I remember to keep my legs together and don't have too many fags and move occasionally and try to keep awake.

So I'm left on the sidelines, with Kevin coming over every now and for a chat between whoops of "well-played Darren Love it. Love it!" Kevin, I say, these Fulham boys look very nice, and very keen and everything, and I'm sure all the splitting is no worse than you would find at another club, but they're hardly Shearers or Ferdinand or Ginolas, are they? I mean, doesn't it bother you, after what you became used to at Newcastle? "No," he replies. "Absolutely not. My interest is



arrive, Kevin Keegan is already out there, urging his players on. "I want to see silly soccer," he is crying. "You're passing which is great lads, but let's have some end product - end product!"

"Hello Kevin," I shout from the other side of the pitch with a little wave. He waves back politely. "Do you want me in goal?" I then shout, because I believe in making myself useful when I can. "We're not that bad yet," he shouts while making little shooting motions with his hands.

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in improving players, whatever their ability."

There are not hundreds of isolators in attendance but two Fulham fans (yes, both of them) turn up out of curiosity to watch the training session. What do you think of Kevin? I ask. Their reply takes the form of sinking to their knees in the mud and getting all worshipful.

He was born in Doncaster, the son of Joe Keegan, a miner. Money was scarce so he was out there raising funds from an early age. He would go down Doncaster Market and collect the wooden boxes which he would then break up and sell door-to-door as firewood. Typically, he always handed the money straight over to his mother, Doris. He was always more interested in making it than having it.

He first became interested in football when his Uncle Frank happened to give him a ball. He practised all day every day. He passed the 11-plus and got into grammar school but didn't do well academically because he was always out there practising.

The first ever team he tried out for was Coventry. Jimmy Hill turned him down. Yes, he was extremely upset. Although as he now says: "If he'd said I was a good footballer, then I would have been worried." He was eventually signed by fourth division Scunthorpe. "It was the sort of place where they an-

nounced the crowd changes to the team."

He went on to Liverpool, then increased his salary five-fold by playing for Hamburg in Germany and winning the European Player of the Year award twice. On his return, he played for Southampton and Newcastle, where Paul Gascoigne was his boot boy. "Great player, useless bootboy. He was always losing mine." He retired at 33, taking Jean and their two daughters to Spain where he played that golf for eight years. Yes, he was quite happy playing golf. Yes, he can live without football. Or at least did. Until he got bored. "One day, when I was standing ready to play a shot on the par-five twelfth over water, I suddenly realised I wasn't enjoying my golf anymore, but had no other purpose." So he returned. To Newcastle. First as consultant. Then manager.

Then, after five years of economically supported, royally funded progress from the bottom of the second division to runner up in the first, he quit causing shock-horror on Tyneside. Nobody could really understand it at the time except perhaps that the team always seem to stumble - fall apart even - at the final hurdle, just when they looked like winning something big. Was he just running away? Or, as people always tend to think when such things

happen, were there horrible skeletons in the cupboard?

According to the version in his book, after five exhilarating but trophy-free years at Newcastle, he became demotivated and, feeling he couldn't take the club any further, asked if he might go at the end of the 1996-7 season. The chairman, Sir John Hall, said he could do so and even, says Keegan, shoot hands on it with him. But then, a couple of days later he was summoned before the board and told that, with the flotation coming up, he would either have to go now or sign for another two years. Anything else would be too damaging. "So, I reacted how Keegan would react. I went." Yes, he has spoken to Sir John Hall since, but only the once. "I called him about six weeks afterwards, just to say hello, really, because we had been very much a team at Newcastle. He seemed quite shocked to hear from me. He said he and Mae (his wife) would take me and Jean (Kevin's wife) out for dinner, but he never did."

The main grumble among Newcastle fans seems to be that none of this was explained to them at the time. One moment Kevin was there, and the next he was gone. "Why didn't you come onto the pitch and say something?" asks a Geordie at the Westminster evening. "Say I had," replies Kevin. "Say I'd come out and said sorry lads,

loan to Mansfield." The next day he had to play Billy in a reserve match against Liverpool's reserve team where their manager Graeme Souness was bragging about his great young players. "See that boy, best scorer in the Irish youth team. See that one, best striker in the Scottish youth team." Then Billy Askew ran out. "He's bald," cried Souness. "No," said Keegan, "he just shaves his head to make him faster." What else could he say?

What does Keegan value most in the end? Effort and what they call in football "honesty". I ask him who he would have playing for him if he could sign up any three players this afternoon - regardless of price or whether they would be willing to come down to second division Fulham. Shearer, he says. "Because he always does it for you, week in, week out." And Robert Lee and Tony Adams. "I don't know Tony, but I like what I see." Not Ginola, then? "Ginola could be the best player in the world," he replies, "but his trouble is he only likes running that way." Which way? "Towards goal. The only time he'll ever run the other way is after half time. But I could never resist playing him."

After Newcastle, Jean did not want him to take up with another team. They could have gone back to Spain. Or concentrated on the race horses they keep on their big estate in Newcastle. But Keegan could not resist the Fulham challenge. What is Chief Operations Manager, by the way? "I'm not the manager. Ray Wilkins is the manager. Yes, I'm responsible for everything that happens, but I don't have to go to every match or be there for every training session. If Jean phones me up to say the girls are missing me, I can go straight home." The family home is still in the north-east although Kevin is now renting somewhere down here. Jean comes down when she can.

Last week he took her to see Miss Saigon. "But I fell asleep during the helicopter bit, which is apparently quite hard to do." The great thing about football people is that they are really not interested in anything but football.

It's time to take a darned good look at your underwear collection



DINAH HALL

There's nothing quite like reading about other people's crotchless leopard print body suits to make one look afresh at one's underwear drawer. I've always regarded knickers as functional garments, and it seems to me - though I may be missing the point here - that if you are going to go crotchless you may as well go the whole hog and drop the knicker part as well. Never the less, mindful that my husband is coming up to that age when he might be most vulnerable to 18-year-olds in snazzy combinations, I have been spurred to finally throw away all the tired grey under-garments that still bear my school name-tapes. (An awful waste, I agree, as I dare say there are a few Conservative MPs out there who could get quite worked

up over baggy gym knickers - though probably only if they were wearing them themselves). It only occurred to me afterwards that it would probably have been just as effective and more economical to sew name-tapes into my husband's boxer shorts. Just a thought. Mrs Merchant.

Still on the subject of undies, an article in one of the Sunday newspapers by Anne Atkins, vicar's wife and beacon of moral certitude, attests to the power of stockings - she said that knowing what she was wearing underneath gave her the courage to face up to John Humphries. It's never too late for an old dog to change her spots is my motto, so knowing I was going to be at an open-

ing of an exhibition in a furniture shop with Peter Mandelson - much more frightening than John Humphries - I heeded her words and put some fresh elastic in my M&S hip-huggers. A complete waste of effort - I only got near enough to observe that he is very thin and pasty, and looks like he could do with a good square meal. But I did meet some very nice members of his fan club wearing long robes and skeleton masks who said I could join if I wanted. Feeling this would compromise my loyalty to Gordon Brown (now there's a man who could carry off Cash's woven name-tapes down his back-side without losing any of his manly prowess) I declined, while thoroughly agreeing with their sentiments that it is indeed "marvel-

lous that a man like him can take time off to admire sofas."

And what a week for Royal socks. First we had Andrew's, and the darned if he does, darned if he doesn't question. Of course he does - mending socks and letting down hem is an important yardstick of traditional values and shows you've got enough money to pay someone to do it for you but are not vulgar enough to squander it. Then there's the poor Queen, having to wear those unfaltering standard-issue blue ankle socks - yuck, just like when you're trying on shoes in a shoe shop with bare feet and they make you put on horrible American Tan pop socks that are still sweaty from the last person...

It's clear the Foreign Office really did bungle this trip - you would have thought they would have foreseen this and had some nice little slippers made by Patrick Cox.

I shall never again sneer at the people round here who order their croissants in French at the local cafe: I thought they were just showing off but clearly they are suffering from a recognised medical condition, Foreign Accent Syndrome. I'm not so convinced by that other topical disease - Peyronie's or "Wonky Willy" to Sun readers. According to Paula Jones, Clinton's member had a pronounced curve to it - either that or it was just looking behind her to check the door was closed.

It's for women, darling. Who did you think it was for?

Ready to wear? Hardly. The Paris prêt-à-porter features the usual wraith-like models in outfits with no armholes. But there is recognisable human life on Planet Fashion. Tamsin Blanchard spotted it at the end of a long week exploring: 'Alexander McQueen, I presume.' Photographs by Ben Elwes.

Fashion designers tend to focus on young women whose breasts are high and perky, whose tummies are flat and free of spare tyres, and whose bottoms have not yet started on the inevitable descent to their ankles. Look at any designer's drawing and you would be forgiven for thinking he (or she – it's not just men) had been given an alien specimen to draw at life-drawing classes. The fashion figure, as taught at art school, is eight hands tall, rather than the seven hands reserved for normal human beings. She has a head the size of a pin-prick (no fashionable woman has more than one brain cell, you see), a short, narrow torso, and legs that would happily run along on into infinity. The only woman I have ever seen that confirmed to this shape is Jodie Kidd. If I were to be so foolish as to stand next to her, my head would reach her tiny waist. And even she has a bigger head than that on the end of a dressmaker's pin.

Last week, at the Paris prêt-à-porter, many designers seemed intent on re-arranging even their own freakish ideal. The fashion figure, as shown for spring/summer 1998, has arms growing out of the front of her body (that's if she has any arms at all) so that armholes fall at the front of a garment instead of at the sides, and shoulders and necklines are displaced left, right and centre.

The designers who were not sticking to the traditional human form as most of us know it, or even their own string-bean fantasy, were keen to push the shape of fashion in a new direction. For this, we can thank Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons. For the past few seasons, Kawakubo has presented clothing with in-built humps and bumps, shoulders hunched

up to the ears, and cocoons of fabric that drape around the body and encase the arms. We have laughed. But now her influence is everywhere. This season, her collection of fluid drapings and layer upon layer of fine fabric came almost exclusively in cream. She does not compromise. Nor does her protégé, Junya Watanabe. But he is not the only one to drape, pleat and wrap his way around the human form. Issey Miyake took a radical departure this season and presented a collection almost entirely of dresses that draped around the body – mostly forgivingly than at Comme des Garçons – and sleeves without hand-holes.

The collection reflected the other main theme of the week in its lightness and airiness. Fabrics were soft, either gauzy, iridescent synthetics or organically wrapped muslin. Martin Margiela, who showed in conjunction with Comme des Garçons, also displaced shoulders and necklines so as to distort them on the body, and rolled fabric in on itself to make a straightforward garment such as a knitted cardigan look weird and strangely wonderful. Or wonderfully strange. The Japanese and the Belgians are the main innovators and experimenters in Paris fashion. What they do seems awkward and odd, but inevitably those ideas eventually work their way into more mainstream clothing in some diluted form.

As for the designers who were happy with the conventional eight-hand fashion drawing, they wanted to show off the long, leggy, narrow form at every opportunity. Dresses have become so sheer and delicate as to be almost invisible.

The best came from John Galliano, fresh from his Belle Epoque Ladies at Dior. For his owl small, 30-odd-piece collection, Galliano took over the 16th-century Château de Vincennes to hold a few magical moments of bohemian madness with Thirties Violet Elizabeth dresses in light dustings of tulle and embroidery, sugar plum fairies, lean, knitted columns and a whirling Sharlou Harlow in raspberry rose dévoré so delicate, it looked as if it would disintegrate if you so much as sneezed on it.

The Australian designer Collette Dinnigan (her celebri-

ty customers include Paula Yates, who watched the show), makes delicate lace dresses that need little imagination and even less modesty to wear. Likewise Chloe, where Stella McCartney used floaty chiffons and wispy silk for her take on the sort of clothes her mother used to wear in the Seventies and the sort that she likes to wear now. Alexander McQueen at Givenchy showed some cobweb-fine tulle dresses with intricate beadwork that appeared to have been sewn on to the skin, and Ann Demeulemeester showed back split blouses so light and fresh they bellowed out behind.

As we approach the beginning of the 21st century, fashion seems to get more and more directionless. It floats here, meanders there, and occasionally rises up in a great puff of smoke and evaporates into thin air. Chanel's collection was relaxed and at ease with itself, with cardigan jackets, slouchy suits, and dresses in candy-coloured tweed frayed at the edges. But it didn't tell us anything new. It took Alexander McQueen to bring the week firmly back to Planes Fashion with his gutsy, glitter-lipped, hair-slashed, cowgirl collection. Frailty, whimsical romance and swooning coquettish were flung by the wayside, to be replaced by hard shoulders, structured tailoring, and mixes of colour (orange, yellow, black and white all in one jacket) that would sent most beige, black-and-baby-blue-clad fashion editors into bad taste trauma syndrome. This was not about pretty clothes, but good old, hard-edged fashion.



Above: John Galliano's diamanté detailing on a Thirties-inspired glamour dress.
Below: Jodie Kidd in Texas oil baroness mode, for Alexander McQueen at Givenchy.



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17/OBITUARIES

Aldo Berni

Aldo Berni, restaurateur: born Bardi, Italy 14 March 1909; married 1947 Esme Clinton (died 1995; one daughter); died Bristol 12 October 1997.

As late as the 1980s, surveys regularly showed that Britain's favourite menu was prawn cocktail, steak and chips and Black Forest gateau. Aldo Berni was the caterer who first dished up the country's preferred meal at his chain of Berni Inns.

We tend to forget how long rationing lasted after the Second World War: in fact, it only ended in 1954, with predictable consequences. A Devon landlord, quoted in the *Good Food Guide* for 1955-56, said: "The

public went beef-mad in 1954". Berni and his older brother, Frank (now 95, and living in Jersey with his wife), were poised to take advantage of post-war steak-hunger. In 1943 they had bought their first licensed restaurant, Horts, characterised by Berni himself, as "the best-known restaurant in Bristol".

In the first edition of the *Good Food Guide* in 1951-52, Raymond Postgate described Horts as "historic, solid, comfortable; excellent service, real feeling for food and wines, and they give mammoth helpings... Speciality: oyster soup and Dover sole." Ten years later Horts had joined the rest of the Berni chain and specialised in steak and (as they were often euphemistically called) scampi.

The chain evolved and grew until it comprised 147 hotels and restaurants, and in 1970 the Bernis sold it to Grand Metropolitan for £14.5 million. Its identity came not just from the food and the name "Berni Inn", but from the furnishings and decor: red velvet, stout wooden chairs and paper parasols for the puddings as well as the cocktails. It was a formula for financial success, because it brought industrialised catering to the restaurant. The cooking facilities needed were simply a central grill and a deep-fryer.

Berni: successful formula

Father John Ramsay

John Ramsay, soldier and priest: born London 24 November 1926; Spiritual Director, Scots College in Rome 1975-77; died Livingston, Lothian 15 October 1997.

A well loved and respected Roman Catholic parish priest, John Ramsay was the Guards officer who masterminded the organisation of the papal visit to Scotland in 1982.

He was born at 4 Princes Gate, London, a couple of hundred yards from the place where in 1982 the SAS made their spectacular raid on the Iranian Embassy. He often said that he couldn't help feeling that there was a chuckle up in heaven because Alec, his eldest brother and hero, was a founder member of the SAS along with David Stirling, and would thoroughly have approved of what they did so close to his old London home.

John was the youngest of four sons, born to Archie (Jock) Ramsay, Member of Parliament for Midlothian and his wife the Honourable Ismay Preston, daughter of the fourth 14th Viscount Gormanston. It was this connection that enabled Ramsay in his priest's house to impress his parishioners with a family tree which clearly linked him to William the Conqueror.

Ramsay went to Eton in January 1940 and recounts his first clear memory at the school. It was in the afternoon and I was

working in my room when a friend of my brother George at the top of the house called Duncan Strachan came and asked if I knew where George was. I answered that I thought he was out playing cricket. He then quietly and as kindly as he could, told me that Dad had been arrested and interned. You can imagine my feelings. He then went out to look for George and tell him the dismal news. George came to my room soon afterwards and we had a miserable evening.

Ramsay went on: Every evening, half an hour or so after supper, there were prayers which we all attended. On this night, however, George and I were told not to attend and we heard afterwards from Duncan what had happened. Prayers were said usual and then before anyone could move, my tutor, the legendary Honourable George Lyttelton said "Stay", and everyone stood rooted to the spot. His words were more or less as follows: "You will all have heard the news that George and John Ramsay's father has been arrested and interned. It is not my intention to enter into the politics of the thing. All I can say is that those boys shall not be made to suffer for their father. If any boy ever says anything insulting to either of them, I give you my word I shall thrash him within an inch of his life. Goodnight".

Later in the year Ramsay was playing cricket one evening and there was a disputed decision. Two boys said words to the effect that nobody could accept my word because I was just a traitor's son. I turned on my heel and walked quietly away without saying a word, and as I did someone whom I had never looked upon as a particular friend said, "Don't worry, I'll deal with this". He was as good as his word for later that evening I was summoned to George Lyttelton's study. "Is what I hear true boy?" "Yes Sir," I replied. I was then dismissed. Later there was a knock on my door. There stood the culprit. "I have come to apologise for what I said this afternoon. I should

not have said it. I have had my punishment". Indeed he had. He could scarcely walk.

When Ramsay looked back after all those years he was still amazed at the fact that there was only one incident in four years in a school of 1100 boys. "I learnt a lot at Eton but the thing I have treasured all my life most to this day is tolerance."

Ramsay blamed Winston Churchill for his father's disgrace which stemmed from the

fact that he had a large number of German aristocratic friends in the 1930s and that he had been as a strong supporter of Neville Chamberlain, and dismissive of Churchill in the House of Commons. The ubiquitous regulation 18b under which he was interned saved those who wanted him out of the way of the trouble of proving him guilty, which they knew he wasn't, while preventing him from proving his innocence. Ramsay remembered visiting his father in Brixton Prison during those four awful years from 1940 to 1944.

In 1944 Ramsay joined the Scots Guards, like two of his brothers. He was to defend his father on the grounds that he was never even tried, while three of his four sons were allowed to join a crack regiment: like the Scots Guards.

Ramsay served in Malaya with distinction where his fellow

Scots Guards officer David, Earl of Airlie recalled that he was a very effective leader of men in the horrors of jungle warfare. It was possibly in Malaya that the seeds were sewn for his decision to forsake a promising army career and go to Bede College in Rome in 1955 to study for the priesthood.



Ramsay (centre) with the Pope in Scotland, 1982

BIRTHS,
MARRIAGES
& DEATHS

DEATHS

SCOTT-AE Barbara, on 16 October 1997, peacefully at home in Oxford, aged 78 years. Beloved wife of the late Peter Scott and a much loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. The funeral will be at St Aloysius Church, Oxford, on Friday 24 October, at 10am, followed by interment at Gloucester Cemetery, London at 3pm. Donations in memory of Anne Scott to Marie Curie Cancer Care, Berks & Bucks Fundraising Office, 80 Barry Avenue, Bicester, Oxon OX6 8DY.

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ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Edinburgh, Trustee, attends a meeting of the trustees of The Prince Philip Trust Fund for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, followed by a Royal Charity Gala, at The Farmer Theatre, Elton College, Berkshire.

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. No 7 Company Coldstream Guards march past the Queen's Guard at Wellington Barracks, 11.30am, band provided by the Welsh Guards.

Birthdays

Sir James Akers, former chairman, West Midlands Regional Health Authority, 62; **Mrs Huine Boggs-Rolfe**, barrister and farmer, 86; **Sir Edwin Bolland**, former diplomat, 75; **Mr Edwin Buckwell**, newspaper columnist, 72; **Mr Chris Cawood**, cricketer, 40; **Professor Bernard Crossland**, mechanical engineer, 74; **Mr Lawrence Day**, former editor, *Woman's Leader*, 73; **The Right Rev Joseph Gray**, former Roman Catholic bishop of Shrewsbury, 78; **Mr Al Greenwood**, rock musician, 46; **Professor Sir Douglas Higgin**, chairman, Oxford Strategic Network, 71; **Mr Patrick Hill**, MP, 46; **The Rev James Hardwick**, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland, 62; **Mr Colin Jeavons**, actor, 68; **Mr Eddie Macken**, showman, 48; **Judge Deric McKinney**, circuit judge, 59; **Mr John Milne**, Home, former Lord Lieutenant, Dumfries and Galloway, 81; **Lord Montague of Beaufort**, founder, National Motor Museum, 71; **Mr Tom Petty**, guitarist and singer, 44; **Sir Anthony Reeve**, former ambassador to South Africa, 59; **Mr Ian Rush**, footballer, 36; **Professor Samual Saul**, former Vice-Chancellor of York University, 73; **William Sharland**, chartered accountant, 65; **Sir Alexander Stirling**, former diplomat, 71; **The Hon Emma Tempest**, writer, 60; **Mr Timothy West**, actor, 63.

Anniversaries

Births: Sir Christopher Wren, mathematician and architect, 1632; **Nicolas de Largillière**, painter, 1656; **Colin Campbell**, Baron Clyde, commander-in-chief during the Indian Mutiny, 1792; **Thomas Hughes**, author of *Tony Brown's Schoolboy Days*, 53pm.

Lectures

Victoria & Albert Museum: Moira Thunder, "18th-century Masquerade Costume Depicted in Prints and Engravings", 2.30pm.

Graham College: Barnard's Inn Hall, London EC1: Michael Harris and Laurence Worms, "The Royal Exchange as a Centre of Publishing", 5.30pm.

CASE SUMMARIES: 20 OCTOBER 1997

The following notes of judgments were prepared by the reporters of the *All England Law Reports*.

Planning

Wardsworth LBC v Mills & Allen Ltd: QBD (Crown Office List) (Mr G. Moriarty QC) 5 Sept 1997. A local authority was entitled to seek orders requiring the removal of an advertisement displayed on a hoarding surrounding land on which building operations were taking place in accordance with a grant of planning permission for the development of a nursing home. The advertisement did not fall within the deemed consent given by r 6 and Class 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 as the development was for residential and not commercial or business purposes.

Colin Morgan (Shoreham, Croydon) for the appellants; Charles Mynors (Bircham & Co) for the respondents

Virgin Cinema Properties Ltd & ors v Secretary of State for the Environment

& ors: QBD (Crown Office List) (Mr G. Bartlett QC) 9 Oct 1997. Since a planning policy did not confer rights or impose duties that were legally enforceable the court could not determine its meaning as a matter of law for the purpose of deciding an issue arising from a planning application.

The decision whether or not to grant planning permission was an administrative decision which was only susceptible to review on the established principles of administrative law.

Jeremy Sullivan QC, Peter Towler (Goulds) for the applicants; Alan Aylsley (Deansbury Solicitors) for the Secretary of State

Evidence

C v DPP: QBD (DwC) (Brooke L. Gage J) 14 Oct 1997.

Where a child of 12 had been charged with an offence contrary to s 14(1) of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, evidence of a previous incident amounting to indecent assault, but in respect of which no prosecution had ensued, could be admitted to rebut the presumption

of *doli incapax*, since it was relevant to show that the child knew that such conduct was wrong.

Gillian Lines (Amin & Co) for the appellants; John Blair Gould (CPIS) for the Director of Public Prosecutions

DPP v G: QBD (DwC) (Brooke L. Gage J) 3 Oct 1997.

A headteacher investigating an assault on a pupil was not a person charged with a duty to investigate offences and accordingly did not come within the provisions of s 67(9) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. Evidence relating to an interview conducted by the headteacher was, therefore, admissible, even though the Code of Practice had not been complied with.

Michael Foster (CPIS) for the Director of Public Prosecutions; Justin Shale (Parkinson & Co, Bracknell) for the respondent

Evidence

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(Sir Richard Scott, V-C) 8 Oct 1997. There were no public policy reasons to justify a claim for blanket immunity from suit in an action for the tort of misfeasance in public office.

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Contract

Eagle Star Life Assurance Co Ltd v Greggs CA (Kennedy Morris LJ, Sir Brian Neil) 9 Oct 1997.

Where an agreement amounted to a contract for the supply of a service within the meaning of s 12 of the Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982, the terms set out in ss 13 and 14 of the Act should, *prima facie*, be implied.

Where, however, the agreement expressly stated that the obligation to provide the service was to be judged subjectively by the party supplying it, the implied terms in ss 13 and 14 were excluded by s 16 of the Act.

Michael Burke Gaffney QC, Thomas Graham (Charles Le Moine, Wellingborough) for the appellants; Donald McCue (Matthew Arnold & Baldwin, Watford) for the respondent

Deaths

SCOTT-AE Barbara, on 16 October 1997, peacefully at home in Oxford, aged 78 years. Beloved wife of the late Peter Scott and a much loved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. The funeral will be at St Aloysius Church, Oxford, on Friday 24 October, at 10am, followed by interment at Gloucester Cemetery, London at 3pm. Donations in memory of Anne Scott to Marie Curie Cancer Care, Berks & Bucks Fundraising Office, 80 Barry Avenue, Bicester, Oxon OX6 8DY.

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The coming together of alien cultures: Nancy Kwan and William Holden in *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960), the film of Mason's book

Photograph: Ronald Grant Archive

Richard Mason

Richard Lakin Mason, writer: born Hale, Cheshire 16 May 1919; married three times (one son, one daughter); died Roms 13 October 1997.

Aldo Berni came to Britain from Italy at the age of 16. His family were already settled in Wales, but his father had the brothers educated in Italy before sending them to join the family business. Aldo Berni claimed that his grandfather, John, had emigrated from Bardi to Wales in 1862, and settled in Merthyr Tydfil. He said that "the whole colony of Italians in Wales were originally brought over by the Bernis", and that, "before the First War, the Bernis had 48 refreshment bars in south Wales. They didn't have coffee machines then, but they used to sell soda and squash and ice-cream and cigarettes. He described his father, Louis, had opened the Louis Cafe in Ebbo Vale, which served soup, a joint and two veg.

In 1947 he had married Esme Clifton, Sprightly, teasing banter was a feature of Aldo and Esme Berni's strong marriage;

but he was devoted to her and made a part of his fortune over to her as a gift.

She died first, in 1995. He was living in a nursing home in Bristol when his wife's will was published in May last year, and he was not surprised to learn that she left the bulk of her £4.8 million to a home for cats and dogs.

—Paul Levy

By then he had already had one novel published, the thriller *The Body Fell on Berlin* (1943), issued under his first two names "Richard Lakin". A second Lakin mystery, *Angel, Take Care* came out in 1947, but by this time *The Wind Cannot Read* (1947) and *The World of Suzie Wong* (1957) were already climbing the best-seller lists, pointing up the fact that sweeping romance invariably sells far better than crime, however ingeniously plotted, however intelligently presented. Money from the novel enabled him

18/LEADER & LETTERS

Less spin, more plain speaking, please, Messrs Blair and Brown



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Police and CS spray

Sir: It is difficult to imagine how Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, manages to sustain his optimism about the use of CS spray by the police ("Straw gives blessing to police use of CS spray", 16 October).

During a trial period, figures from the Association of Chief Police Officers showed a 6.8 per cent drop in assaults against officers armed with the spray. However, there was an even greater drop of 14 per cent in assaults against those in the unarmed control group. This may demonstrate no more than unreliable methodology, but it certainly doesn't provide evidence that CS protects the police.

The ACPO guidelines state that the spray is to be used "to gain a tactical advantage in a violent encounter" or "to subdue a violent suspect who cannot otherwise be restrained". There are numerous reports of incidents in which those affected believe that such guidance was not followed, including one occasion in which it is claimed that the police sprayed CS into a crowded coach and shut the doors, and another where CS was used during an incident in a children's home.

If Jack Straw wants the police to have "the best protection that we can provide", he would do well to give serious consideration to how best to develop effective policing strategies which respect civil liberties and uphold human rights standards – an approach far more likely to sustain and enhance the public co-operation, trust and confidence on which the police depend – rather than arming officers with a quick fix solution based on muddled research.

LIZ PARATT
Liberty
London SE1

Working women

Sir: In asking two women with only one child between them, one in her twenties and one in her thirties, to comment on the proposition that some women in their forties are finding that "work doesn't work any more" (report, 17 October), you missed the chance to make a serious contribution to a discussion that, far from being a passing concern for a few women, is one of today's major issues, regardless of gender.

It is natural to assume that the people charged with administering affairs of state know what they are doing. But the striking thing about memoirs and official records, when they are eventually published, is that they usually reveal that the government was more confused on the inside than it looked from the outside, not less. It usually turns out that ministers knew only slightly more about what was going on than the rest of us, and that most big newspaper stories are as likely to be understatements as overstatements of the truth. Seen in this light, the confusion of the weekend over the Government's attitude towards the single European currency bodes ill.

Until last week it seemed clear what the Government was trying to do, although the way it was doing it seemed unnecessarily devious and over-reliant on news management. It seemed that the Prime Minister and the Chancellor wanted to talk up the possibility of Britain joining the mon-

etary union "soon" after its launch in 15 months' time. This was logical. It helped strengthen their hand as pro-Europeans in talks with our EU partners; it brought down the pound, which helped our exports; and it helped prepare public opinion for the eventual decision.

The trouble was that the spinning of journalists was being carried out primarily by Gordon Brown's doctors, Charlie Whelan and Ed Balls, and went beyond what Tony Blair wanted. It was when *The Independent* reported last Tuesday that a rift had opened between Mr Blair and Mr Brown that ministers and press officers alike began to lose control of the situation. That story was correct, evidence of which is provided by the fact that it provoked abuse rather than considered denial. Moreover, all the story did was report the fact that briefings from the Treasury were being contradicted by the Prime Minister's office – evidence that a small truth can lead to a great hullabaloo.

Mr Blair and Mr Brown, fearing that the story was becoming one of a split rather than of a policy shift, threw the engine into reverse and managed to make things worse. The Chancellor's interview on Friday, said to have been granted to *The Times* as a "reward" for downplaying the split story (itself a worrying sign for the relations between the press and the Government in this new era), contained one line which hinted that Britain would not join the monetary union for some time. But Mr Whelan told journalists that the Chancellor meant that Britain would not join in this parliament – in other words, until 2002. So the interview was confidently reported as "Brown rules out euro", when the Chancellor had in fact stuck to the letter of the existing line: that entry in 1999 was "very unlikely" but, if it was in the national interest and the people approved it in a referendum, it could happen then, or later. This gap between the words spoken, and the interpretation placed on them by

the politicians' minders, is an increasingly dismaying one. Why can't the politicians speak straight in the first place?

Some basic points remain clear. There has been no realistic prospect for some time of Britain joining monetary union when exchange rates are fixed irrevocably in 1999, although part of the Government's problem has been the Chancellor's obsessive desire to keep that option open. That, in turn, makes entry before the next election unlikely, because the next obvious date for joining would be 1 January 2002, when euro notes and coins start to circulate. If Britain were to join them, there would either have to be a referendum towards the end of Mr Blair's first term, or a general election fought on the issue in 2001. We know the Prime Minister is not keen on either option. So what is likely to happen? Oughtn't we to be discussing the options?

Mr Brown wants to keep open options for early entry because he fears business

opinion might turn nasty. Mr Blair wants to put off discussion because he fears public opinion will turn to the Conservatives. That, at the very least, a difference of emphasis on a vitally important issue. Beyond that, we do not know how the Government intends to proceed, which is an element of uncertainty built on a difference of view.

Mr Blair needs to rely less on nuance and more on plain speaking, preferably his own. Let him set out the options for the future, and the factors he thinks we, as a nation, ought to take into account. One implication of last weekend is that he thinks public opinion will shift when Britain is surrounded by successful euro economies (including Ireland) with lower rates of interest, and that we might have a referendum after the next election to join in around 2005. Is he then sincere in saying that this country must help shape monetary union? He must say what he thinks and defend his position in public.

LETTERS



Competition Bill

Sir: Few would disagree that the present UK law on competition is inadequate, if not useless. This does not mean that it is heretical to oppose the planned replacement ("Nothing to fear from the Competition Bill", 17 October).

The Bill is a monster. "Well-run businesses should have nothing to fear from the legislation," you say. They won't, provided they have enough lawyers crawling over their business deals.

The Bill is intended to apply the principles of European competition law in the UK arena. The Treaty of Rome's two articles have 375 words between them. Most of the relevant procedure is contained in a single regulation, dating from 1962, which runs to about 5,500 words.

The 72 clauses of the Competition Bill contain 15,000-odd words. The 14 schedules add at

least 20,000 more. Length alone would not matter if it was set out as an orderly narrative. It is not. Beating a course through the verbal thicket will challenge the reasoning of the non-specialist lawyer, let alone the businessman or consumer.

A textual comparison between the Conservative government's 1996 draft and the present government's two drafts reveals that much of the original remains intact. Improvements have been tacked on like leanto extensions to a building unfit for human habitation.

We have waited a long time for a substantial reform of UK competition law. Surely we could wait a little longer for the draftsmen to produce a more elegant design, closer to the spare European model.

CELIA HAMPTON
Editor
FT Business Law: Europe
London N7

Smoking risks

Sir: The claim that smokers' families are 25 per cent more likely to get cancer (report, 17 October) is not supported by sound science. The so-called "shocking new research" on which this assertion is based is merely a review of data from selected earlier research studies, the results of which have been available for up to 20 years.

The conclusions of this review are simply not justified by the data. Certain reports by respected authors giving conclusions to the contrary are ignored. The vast majority of epidemiological studies of environmental tobacco smoke and lung cancer and heart disease have not reported overall statistically significant increases in risk. Your claim that "tens of thousands" of people die prematurely each year due to exposure to environmental tobacco smoke is unsupportable

by the weight of existing scientific evidence.

To suggest that the Government could cut heart disease deaths at a stroke by banning smoking in public places is misguided, especially when actual risk factors such as a high fat diet, obesity, etc, are ignored.

Intimating, as Dr Bill O'Neill from the British Medical Association does, that individual smokers are exposing their loved ones to needless risk and killing non-smokers is playing on people's emotions.

Dr A PAYNE
Senior Scientific Adviser
British American Tobacco
Staines, Surrey

a breathtaking misrepresentation of the survey's findings.

Of 40 UK publishers considered, Robert Hale was placed joint third in the league table and equal second for overall performance which was described as "excellent". We were one of only two publishers scoring 100 per cent in author satisfaction.

MARTIN KENDALL
Director
Robert Hale Ltd
London EC1

Football hooliganism

Sir: Journalists repeatedly bemoan the failure to prevent "hooligans" from travelling to England football games abroad. The way to do this is to order convicted hooligans to attend at their local police station at the time of each England match.

A L J THOMAS
London W5

Author satisfaction

Sir: In your article "Bloomsbury gloom" (6 October), concerning the Society of Authors' survey of book publishers' performance, reference was made to Robert Hale as "no-hoppers",

Wildlife under threat

Sir: I must correct one point in Polly Toynbee's excellent article (13 October) on the proposed fifth terminal at Heathrow. The rare Water Avens plant does not occur on the Perry Oaks Sludge Works, but in the old Colne Valley meadow to the west of the airport, the site of the proposed T5/M25 spur road complex.

This flower-rich meadow is not within the airport boundary, and the destruction of it goes against the principles of UK biodiversity plans. No such colony of plants exists anywhere else in the South-east, which is too dry. BAA are now proposing "translocation" – but there are no similar damp meadows in the area for this to work.

This may not be a "picnic spot" but it is part of the heritage of West Middlesex and indeed London – the Colne Valley is a Regional Park – and what is the logic of destroying our precious wildlife, so that we can fly at whim, often to visit the natural world of other countries whose existence is threatened by global warming?

Polly Toynbee made some good points about rationing in the future, the first time I have seen "demand management" brought into the debate. With airports and flying threatening sustainable development worldwide, this is a subject vital for inclusion at the Kyoto Summit.

ROSE McMANUS
Friends of the Earth West
London
Hounslow, Middlesex

It takes all sorts . . .

Sir: Emma Haughton, in her article on regional accents (15 October), makes the point that there is a hierarchy of accents in Britain, and that this is discriminatory. However, she accepts that those with "undesirable" regional voices should "adapt" or "modify" to fit in. Would your paper accept the same conclusion in relation to those of different race or colour?

In "Cool Britannia", in the Nineties, I had hoped that difference was to be celebrated rather than marginalised.

CLARE ARCHIBOLD
Lecturer in Law
The Queen's University of Belfast

Coming to a hedgerow near you, the fabulous new autumn season



MILES
KINGTON

And the good news is that autumn shades are here again! Yes, in hedgerows and catwalks the length and breadth of Britain, the new range of autumn tints and hues is on display, from Indian summer yellow to Kashmiri problems brown, sending the seasonal fashion writers into a tizzy of excitement!

"Yes, indeed, a sensational new range of autumn hues is here this year," drools *Mahonia Japonica*, our girl in the shrubbery, "softening the landscape with a layer of freshly fallen, hand-grown leaves which stretch stunningly across the world of autumn in a symphony of chocolate browns, russets, pippins and blackberry crumble. September is out now

and October is in, and to celebrate the new month, they have created the most divine new look of drifting foliage, off-the-shoulder owl man's beard and a constant shimmer of falling chestnut leaves – but mind that cowpat!"

Yes, Mind that Cowpat! is just one of the many hilarious new offerings in the new BBC autumn schedule, which was unveiled recently before a gasping crowd of acolytes in the presence of BBC Chairman Sir Piggling Bland. "Seventy-five autumns have come and gone, and still the BBC blunders on," said Sir Piggling Bland to cheers, before declaring autumn officially open with a season of repeats that no other broadcaster can match. You saw it last year

and you'll see it again next year and it's here again this year – yes, autumn! When the old countryman sets off across the fields looking for the sloe bush to yield its annual crop of sloes for him to make his winter-long brew of gin and sugar and sloes, and keeps looking for the sloe bush, and goes on looking for the old sloe bush, but doesn't find it because it's been grabbed up by the conservation-minded farmer, so he says, "Oh, what the hell – this year I'll buy a bottle of sloe gin from Sainsbury's, and be buggered to the old sloe bush!"

Yes, Be Buggered To The Old Sloe Bush! is a wacky autumn BBC TV food, drink and sex show in which contestants try

and think up something new in the cooking line but fail, just one of the many new programme ideas on the BBC this autumn, the channel that brought you *Della's Myth*, and *Rick's Time*, and whatever happened to *Keith Floyd*? And two fat ladies, both dressed like mother, one's merry and so is the other, and the Spice Girls (that's four of them, Dried Spice, Alspice, Mixed Spice, and Mince Spice) and talking of currant affairs, the spin doctors have been out in the hedgerows again, straining us all along with gusserine cobwebs, because it's

Autumn! And time for your child to take baked beans tins to harvest festival, though no British child knows where baked beans come from or

where they grow, yet believe it or not, girls, baked bean brown is one of the top 10 British autumn tints of all time! The others being: 1) St Auburn's; 2) Burnt toast; 3) Fading Summer Sun tan; 4) Old Army Knak; 5) Milk Chocolate; 6) Natural Brunette; 7) Knives Up Mrs Brown; 8) Tea Bag Stain On The Table; and 9) Look What The Dog's Done because all roads lead to roan, and deep in the hedgerows something stirred, if it wasn't a hedgehog it must be a bird, and it's nearly time for Guy Fawkes Night, when we try to set the garden alight, because it's

Autumn! Season of chaos and drama-does, and seized-up locks and putting back clocks when the sailor puts his boat

away, and the farmer makes straw and girls make hay, and it's only 20,000 TV ads till Christmas, but forget about Christmas because it's still autumn and it's time to do whatever the opposite of spring cleaning is, autumn messng about that's it! Messing up the landscape with squashed conkers, and noisy meddlars, and rosehip-tinted spectacles, and unmade beds of bracken, and exhausted runner beans, and falling fronds of the flower which you call faglowe but I call digitalis.

"Yes, You Call It Faglowe But I Call It Digitalis!" is the flagship comedy series of the new autumn schedule!" said Sir Piggling Bland, addressing a host of notepads. "I don't know what a flagship comedy is, but I do know that we are entering a new digitalis era, and if we don't keep up, we will fall behind, isn't that right John?"

Yes, Isn't That Right John? is a wacky new comedy about two TV bosses who agree not to fire each other, only everyone else, and it's your TV every night from now on, and, as the days get shorter and the nights get longer, and the hot water bottles move mysteriously to the bottom of the bed in the dark, and the apples lie in silent rows in the shed, as dead as Remembrance Day, remember to wear your poppy with pride, because summer did her best but died, and it's now... Autumn!

Coming soon: winter.

Sept 11 1997

هذا من ألاضل

Guilty: of killing courtroom drama with the cosh of scientific evidence



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE
ON THE NANNY TRIAL

Watching the trial of Louise Woodward, the English nanny accused of causing the death of her charge, the first thing that strikes you is what bad television it makes. I don't mean by this that Sky News has made the wrong decision in broadcasting the trial almost in its entirety – because if you have the time on hand it offers something decidedly more gripping than the routine packing material of 24-hour news. But there's no getting round the fact that, compared to most fictional courtroom scenes, this is weary stuff – leadenly paced and lacking in any sense of dramatic protocol. The quality of real trials that almost never makes it into the fictional version, you realise, is their grinding laboriousness.

The other day, for example, Barry Scheck, the defending counsel, attempted to speed up the process of identifying slides of brain tissue taken from the dead child – a business that must already have seemed interminable to the jury. The prosecution objected, insisting that he stick to a much more long-winded procedure, in which he asked questions and his witness gave him the answers he already knew.

Nor does the judge have any respect for the demands of narrative urgency: on the same day he interrupted a developing line of questions by lecturing the jury on the elaborate mental precautions they were to take whenever a lawyer used the word "assuming". The principals "um" and "er"; lose their places in their notes, fall silent for aching gaps of consideration, blunder with their charts and diagrams, get entangled in microphone wires, fuss over sight-lines, address each other with casual informality and even miss the point of a question.



Accused: Louise Woodward, with Barry Scheck, former defence attorney of OJ Simpson

Photograph: AP

tion completely. In short, everything they do dissipates any sense of narrative tension.

It is easily restored, of course, by a recollection of the circumstances of the case: one loved child dead and another seen always as a cameo profile from the court's fixed camera – patiently attending the autopsy of her life. But – apart from tautly dramatic occasions such as the testimony of the bereaved parents – it requires an act of imagination to restore moral urgency to the drab procedure you see here. When it comes to the complex scientific evidence, this anaesthetising dullness is exactly what the defence lawyers want – to draw the jury into deeper and deeper levels of magnification until barely a strip of ground remains for absolute conviction. If all that you see are fictional trials, this might sound counter-intuitive: on screen, or in novels, the courtroom remains a place where the old forms of judgement – gut instinct and amateur psychology – go hand in hand with scientific absolutism, the DNA test being the very pinnacle of irrefutability. How does a jury find its feet in such a dizzying place?

One answer may be suggested in a phrase used by the neuropathologist who testified the other day. He talked at one point about "gross observation", meaning the first, general assessment of the facts, without the aid of microscopes or scientific instruments. He was using the word dispassionately, but "gross" is a term that

minutiae provide a place of refuge for a lawyer in difficulties. A kind of arms race of expertise has therefore developed, with both sides fielding prodigiously qualified witnesses to deploy their professional convictions on either side of the question – the net result often being an almost perfect equilibrium of incomprehensible authority. Evidence is called about the nature of evidence and even, sometimes, evidence about the evidence for the evidence – a vertiginous recession of closer and closer inspection. How does a jury find its feet in such a dizzying place?

This persistent appetite for emotional plausibility can also be exploited by lawyers. When Matthew Eappen's parents

carried overtones of contempt before it became a contemporary exclamation of disgust. The word implies something clumsy or coarse-grained, as opposed to the "fine" distinctions of detailed observations (and, in that, it testifies to our general cultural prejudice in favour of refinement, the broad assumption that truth will always increase in direct ratio to the degree of magnification). But "gross observation" is probably what most juries (by which I mean most people, including myself) are naturally inclined towards. It is certainly the quality that is most frequently represented in fictional courtroom scenes, where the sly intuition of the barrister will provoke a revealing outburst, or where a single dramatic witness will categorically turn the course of the trial.

This persistent appetite for emotional plausibility can also be exploited by lawyers. When

Matthew Eappen's parents

This is madness, unless we all agree to pay up



POLLY TOYNBEE
THE COST OF NHS DRUGS

Recently a new drug for Alzheimer's disease finally gained its licence. Aricept, claim its manufacturers, is the first drug to make a measurable difference to those in the early stages of the disease. Some 200,000 people who are at the mild to moderate stage may be suitable for treatment with the drug.

Good news? Not for the NHS. It would cost some £200m to prescribe it to all those who might want it. This one drug would eat up two-thirds of the extra bung the Chancellor has given the entire NHS to see it through the winter. A few health authorities have agreed to prescribe it and some have refused to do so, while others are still undecided, under intense pressure from patients.

They are patients such as John Gillman, a sufferer in his seventies whose wife, Mar-

jorie, is fighting to have him prescribed Aricept on the NHS. They live in Buxton, but North Derbyshire is one of the non-prescribing health authorities. She heard about the drug from a niece in Canada who saw a television programme about it. But when she took her husband to his consultant to ask for Aricept, she was told that although John should have it, the hospital could not prescribe it. Nor could their GP.

The Gillmans live on a small pension, but she is now spending £105 a month to get Aricept prescribed privately. "It means I have to save on food and heating and he's always cold," she says. "We've both worked since we were 14 and paid our taxes, and my husband fought in north Africa, Sicily and D-Day, yet we've never scrounged – unlike some. He has a right to Aricept on the NHS." North Derbyshire says no, because they have no extra money, but if the Gillmans lived elsewhere, they might get it free.

Under the last government all painful rationing was shuffled off by frightened health secretaries, forcing local health authorities to decide what treatments to offer, at what opportunity cost to the rest of their patients. So people were treated randomly according to their post code, while ministers kept their hands clean of any politically dangerous decisions.

No longer. This government is poised to take the responsibility itself for NHS rationing.

Following ministers' new policy of fairness across the service, they will start to decide centrally what the NHS will and will not provide. They will begin with drug rationing, as the soaring drug bill now costs 13 per cent of NHS spending.

Aricept is a good case study in rationing. It got a licence, which proved it was both safe and efficacious. But to get a licence a drug has to offer only a marginal improvement in a condition – and the licensing authority takes no account whatever of its cost or value for money.

Now the government may

offer a slight improvement it offers is bad value for the money. The drug slows the progress of the disease by about six months, but does not arrest it. It adds just a few points on the scale of cognitive abilities, measured by a technical IQ test, but the bulletin concludes: "The drug failed to influence day-to-day functioning, quality of life measures and rating scores of overall dementia." It does not make sufferers any more capable of caring for themselves.

"Rubbish," says Marjorie Gillman, who thinks Aricept is doing wonders for her husband. "He's sleeping better and he's more active, though his memory is still not good. I see a big difference in him, and so do my friends. That's why I'm paying so much for it." Perhaps it does more good to some than to others, but, in the end, double-blind trials with placebos are the only way to tell, and so far the evidence suggests that the improvement is small.

Mrs Gillman will have none of it. "I'm writing to Tony Blair to demand we get it on the NHS," she says. And most of us in her position might feel the same, clinging to anything

that might ease such a terrible illness. Yet someone does have to decide whether £200m would bring more health and happiness to more people if it were spent elsewhere.

There are now so many expensive new drugs arriving every year that the NHS is in danger of being bowled over by the cost. A central NHS Drugs Committee would at least ensure equal treatment and value for money. It would also call in existing drugs and make sure that each was the cheapest and most effective available, eventually creating a whole NHS formulary of approved drugs, striking out expensive brand names where cheaper generics were available. It would limit doctors' prescribing

it might end the drug companies' sleazy and unseemly advertising, inducements and brazen seductions of doctors. Now sit back and wait for the explosion of protest from the drug industry.

The scheme does have one danger. Some, like the Gillmans, will still scrimp and save to buy privately those licensed drugs that the new committee has not approved. It could widen the gap between private and NHS care – a gap that threatens the universal nature of the NHS if too many people run for private cover. After all, the collective thinking

is that there are now so many expensive new drugs arriving every year that the NHS is in danger of being bowled over by the cost

set up an NHS Drugs Committee, composed of doctors, to decide whether a drug meets a stringent new cost-effectiveness test before anyone prescribes it on the NHS. The drug companies will not be pleased, for fortunes have been made out of some expensive drugs marketed as miracle cures that make people only a little better.

Is Aricept a new wonder drug? The latest edition of the *Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin*, often critical of drug company hype, says that the NHS should not prescribe it on the evidence of trials so far.

powers and it might end the drug companies' sleazy and unseemly advertising, inducements and brazen seductions of doctors. Now sit back and wait for the explosion of protest from the drug industry.

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The soul food that America craves



MARY DEJEVSKY
A SURPRISE BLOCKBUSTER

In the end it was a black impresario, Kenneth Edmonds, and his wife, Tracey, who agreed to finance it, with the proviso that songs by some of their company's artists be incorporated. But it is not the music that *Soul Food* enthusiasts mention first. It is the theme and the treatment: a family saga, played out around the table preparing roast chicken, collard greens, catfish and other black, Southern dishes. The 10-year-old boy narrator has enormous eyes that he rolls heavenward just like – dare one say – those long-vanished pictures of Little Black Sambo. His aunts have no compunction about telling him to "get his black ass out of here".

To white cinema-goers, the treatment seems almost dangerous in the politically correct world of today's United States. "Big Mama" is over-plump and wears a big apron. The daughters (yes, daughters, not their husbands) stand around the table preparing roast chicken, collard greens, catfish and other black, Southern dishes.

The 10-year-old boy narrator has enormous eyes that he rolls heavenward just like – dare one say – those long-vanished pictures of Little Black Sambo. His aunts have no compunction about telling him to "get his black ass out of here".

The film chronicles the near-collapse and eventual restoration of the family when "Big Mama" falls ill.

Tensions burst into the open, tensions that have built up over a generation and more since the family moved from the South to Chicago.

To be sure, the characters are types, but they are types that American film-goers have rarely seen on screen before. For blacks, they offer a reflection of their real lives, positive and negative (the closeness of the family, and the strains that threaten it).

For whites, they open a window on to a world that, largely by the choice of both sides, is usually closed: a black world beyond street gangs, welfare mothers and Oprah Winfrey.

Black Americans may make up a large proportion of US cinema audiences, but their enthusiasm does not of itself guarantee a film success. Nonetheless, *Soul Food*, released four weeks ago, is already on the verge of overtaking *The Peacemaker*, the \$70m budget nuclear terrorist blockbuster, as the season's most popular film.

Soul Food cost \$7m to make. It has little sex or violence and no special effects – unless you count a kitchen fire that does not even burn the house down. Indeed, its lack of violence particularly was cited as a major inadequacy by the 10 Hollywood production companies that sent away George Tillman, its 28-year-old director, empty handed.

And if proof were still needed that *Soul Food* has managed to cross the racial divide, that proof is in the eating. The sight of the laden dinner table and the sound of family banter have spurred nostalgia for traditional family meals. "A hunger for kinship," said one headline, over a set of pictures showing mainly white, multi-generational families at table, "brings the ritual back".

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Markets braced for turmoil after EMU confusion

Financial markets are braced for a day of turbulence after the Government said it was "highly unlikely" that Britain would join Economic and Monetary Union in 1999. With today marking the 10th anniversary of the 1987 stock market crash and the start of order-driven trading, it promises to be a nerve-jangling session in the City, as Nigel Coyle and Diane Coyle report.

The consensus among City economists yesterday was that the apparent U-turn by the Government will lead to some reversal of the stock market's surge several weeks ago when a newspaper report suggested Britain would enter EMU in the first wave. They said longer-term interest rates were likely to be lower and the need for fiscal tightening ahead of 1999 would not now be so great.

Experts predicted the pound could jump as much as the five pence to the German mark it shed earlier this month when the first policy leak persuaded the markets that Britain might join the single currency early.

On the equity markets, Adam Cole, UK economics analyst at HSBC James Capel, said: "I think markets will fall tomorrow, not catastrophically so, but we could perhaps see 50 to 100 points off the FTSE 100."

Michael Hughes, group economic adviser at BZW, the investment bank, said: "Interest rates aren't going to go down as quickly as had been thought and the exchange rate should receive a fair boost. The effect should be modestly negative for equities. The Government hasn't given up on EMU membership so convergence trends will follow, but more slowly."

He added that taxes would now not have to be raised as sharply in the 1998 and 1999 Budgets. With markets already nervous about the 1987 crash anniversary and the first day of order-driven trading emotions would be running high today, he said. "It is not exactly great timing."

David Kern, chief economist at NatWest Group, said: "Most of the initial effect will be to reverse some of the effects generated by the earlier story a few weeks ago. At that

time the result was to boost the stock market and sterling came down, which was generally welcomed by British business. The initial effect could be to reverse some of those things, but I wouldn't want to exaggerate it."

Mr Kern added that Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, had not said anything inconsistent with Britain joining EMU by 2002, the date most widely expected in the City. But he said the financial markets and British business needed clarity on the issue.

Several economists said the Government's credibility in the City would be severely dented by the confusion created by contradictory, off-the-record briefings.

Gerard Lyons, chief economist at Japanese bank DKB, said he thought the decision not to join the single currency early made economic sense. But he added: "The way this has been reached reflects very little on the Treasury team. Gordon Brown has gone from iron chancellor to Flash Gordon."

He continued: "We must hope they learn to conduct policy in a more open and sensible way. It is ridiculous to think we must learn to see what *The Sun* says to get the true version."

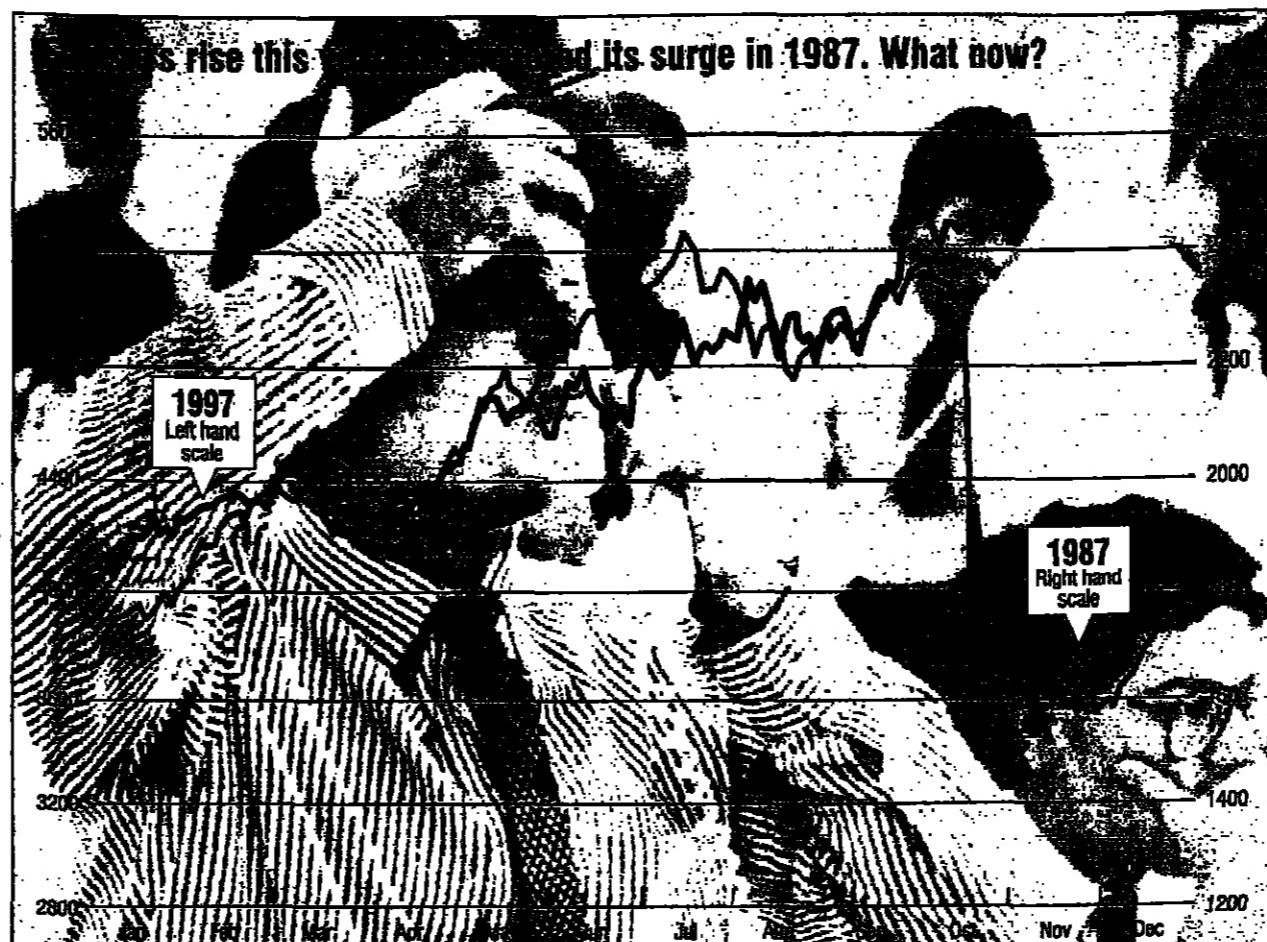
Michael Saunders, of the US investment bank Salomon Brothers, said: "People will be less inclined to believe the stories the Government is giving. There has probably been some harm done to credibility as far as the markets are concerned."

Returning to the financial fall-out, Mr Lyons of DKB said: "The pound will be the most interesting to watch because usually it suffers if there is a conflict at the heart of government. But because of the EMU implications that might not happen this time."

Mr Brown will be able to witness any stock market gyrations at close hand because he is due to switch on the new Stock Exchange Electronic Trading System, dubbed "Big Bang Two".

There has already been mounting speculation over whether the FTSE 100 is set for a correction. Footsie started this year at 4,118 but jumped 161 points to 5,226 last month following reports that the Government favoured early EMU entry. It stood at 5,271 on Friday.

A new poll for Salomon Brothers by Mori showed that 54 per cent were against Britain joining the single currency, 27 per cent in favour and 19 per cent undecided.



Marks & Spencer signs up to the euro

Britain could be sucked inexorably into the European currency system, according to some Treasury officials.

Barrie Clement discloses a highly significant decision by Marks & Spencer to accept the euro which could make the death of the pound a virtual fait accompli.

Marks & Spencer, the UK's leading retailer, will reveal this week its intention to accept the euro in its 286 stores throughout Britain when it comes into use on the Continent on January 1999.

Despite a likely decision by the British Government to stay out of the system for the time being, other retail groups are expected to follow suit, making the euro a "shadow" currency in this country.

The purely commercial actions of some of Britain's flagship companies could set up a gravitational pull into the new currency, some Treasury officials believe.

Widespread use of the euro would familiarise Britons with its use and perhaps dilute some of their more xenophobic fears.

A spokeswoman for Marks & Spencer yesterday confirmed the decision, arguing that continental visitors to Britain after 1999 would want to use the euro for shopping and that the stores chain was preparing to accept it.

New euro-friendly tills are ready to go "live" at two locations – in Cardiff and Reading – and five more will be up and running by the end of November.

The Marks & Spencer spokeswoman said the new tills were being introduced partly because existing machinery was nearing the end of its 10-year life span. After more than a decade of use it was important to access all the implications when deciding on replacements.

She pointed out that the tills would also be able to accept any major currency – the company has more than half its retail outlets abroad. But she acknowledged that the euro was uppermost in the company's mind.

Customers will be able to go into any Marks & Spencer store in Britain, pay for the goods in euros and have their change in sterling. It is thought that Marks & Spencer made the decision to keep pace with competitors who might also be adopting a similar policy.

One senior source in the store's group said that other big retailers would be "daft" not to follow suit.

At the moment the only large businesses accepting foreign currencies are hotels and some businesses in areas such as Holyhead in North Wales where some traders accept Irish pounds.

Some officials at the Treasury are keen to point to the decision by Marks & Spencer because they believe it reinforces the view that there is an inexorable movement towards British acceptance of the new currency.

That view remains despite warnings by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that taxes would need to be increased by £20bn if Britain decided to join the single currency in the first wave in January 1999.

BT set to hold talks with rival bidders for MCI

British Telecom is this week expected to hold talks with the two US phone companies battling to buy MCI, its American partner. Meanwhile WorldCom, one of the bidders, is strongly tipped to raise its \$30bn (£19bn) offer for MCI as early as today. Chris Godmark, Business Correspondent, reports.

Though BT's year-long hopes of taking over MCI appear finished, the company looks set to salvage its US ambitions with a three-way link-up. BT and MCI paved the way to discussions last week when both companies lifted a gagging clause in their merger agreement, which prevented them from talking to outside bidders.

However, penalty clauses remain in force, which would compel MCI to pay BT \$450m plus £15m in expenses if the US group was taken over without BT's agreement. The penalty clause, plus BT's existing 20 per cent stake in MCI, give the UK group a pivotal role in any discussions.

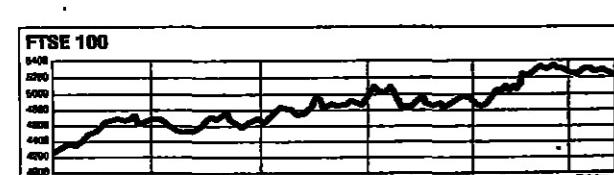
BT would be obliged to hold talks with both rival bidders for MCI according to advisers. However, sources close to BT have made clear their preference for a deal with GTE, the local phone group which last week entered the ring with a \$28bn all-cash offer. BT's revised \$24bn bid for MCI, in a mixture of cash and shares, was in effect shot down earlier this month when WorldCom pounced with its \$30bn all-share offer.

The high-profile publicity assault by Bernard Ebbers, WorldCom's president, is thought to have alienated BT's senior management. Advisers have pointed to the closer links between GTE's management culture and the warm signals of support for BT's continuing role in an alliance voiced last week by Chuck Lee, GTE's chairman.

The situation could be further complicated if WorldCom, as is widely expected on Wall Street, this week raises its bid for MCI by around 10 per cent, to \$33bn. GTE would almost certainly have to follow suit.

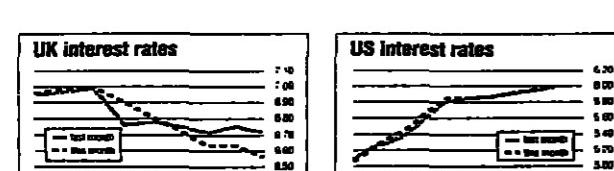
BT yesterday refused to comment on reports it had already held discussions with GTE before WorldCom launched its offer on 1 October, or that the UK group was keen for a three-way merger with MCI and GTE. MCI is known to have been approached by GTE twice over the past 18 months. Mr Lee contacted MCI last year, before BT's original bid, and again this summer.

STOCK MARKETS



Indices	Close	Wk's chg	Wk's chg%	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5,271.10	43.80	0.84	5,330.8	3,900.4	3.209
FTSE 250	4,950.40	78.10	1.56	4,983.8	4,348.1	3.253
FTSE 350	2,388.80	24.50	0.98	2,355.2	1,949.7	3.285
FTSE All Share	2,495.18	2.95	0.12	2,492.41	2,279.79	3.268
FTSE SmallCap	2,495.2	27.50	1.16	2,465.3	2,128.4	3.023
FTSE Financials	1,815.1	7.50	0.57	1,846.5	1,697.7	3.19
FTSE AIM	784.8	6.10	0.81	1,183	1,003.8	0.966
Dow Jones	7,947.03	-20.14	-0.25	8,026.31	5,972.73	1.7
Nikkei	17,478.42	101.50	0.58	21,612.3	17,504.7	0.821
Hang Seng	1,380.01	572.11	4.71	1,651.27	1,205.17	3.055
Dax	4,061.50	-127.02	-3.03	4,438.93	2,659.25	1.963

INTEREST RATES

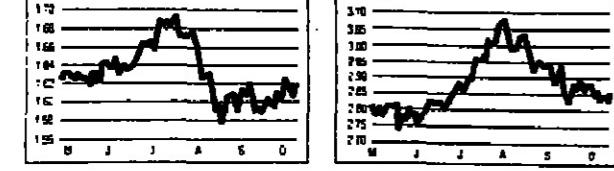


Money Market Rates	3 Month	1 yr chg	1 year	1 yr chg	10 year	1 yr chg	Long term	1 yr chg
UK	7.50	-1.30	7.50	-1.17	6.51	-1.07	6.50	-1.39
US	7.28	-0.25	6.08	-0.21	6.16	-0.34	6.44	-0.38
Japan	0.53	-0.25	0.59	-0.07	1.88	-0.91	2.60	-0.63
Germany	3.66	-0.55	4.20	-0.96	5.69	-0.29	6.24	-0.59

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Per cent	Wk's chg	% chg	Falls	Per cent	Wk's chg	% chg
Redland	342	-1.5	32.82	PJB Mining	249	unch	-9.45
Reed Ind	637	-10.5	19.74	Allied Colloids	105	-2	-7.49
BICC	200	-8	17.65	Premier Farnell	510	-4.5	-7.44
Medeva	242.5	-3	16.03	TI Group	631	-38	-6.58

CURRENCIES



OTHER INDICATORS

Close	Wk's chg	Yr Ago	Index	Chg	Yr Ago	Wk's chg		
Brent Oil (\$)	20.07	-0.67	24.21	GDP	112.80	3.50	109.0	24-Dec
Gold (\$)	324.75	-4.50	380.25	RPI	159.30	3.6	153.76	07-Oct
Silver (\$)	4.92	-0.32	4.97	Base Rates (%)	104.50	0.00	97.80	
								source: Bloomberg

Windfall factor 'disappearing from the high street'

Higher interest rates are unnecessary, according to a new retail report which says that the windfall factor is disappearing from the high street and that consumers are behaving cautiously. The report from Verdict Research on "Retailing in 2001" says that though windfall spending has made its mark on sectors such as DIY, electrical goods and furniture, "this demand surge is now easing off".

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MARKETS

Five employment killers in or out of EMU

"Flexible labour markets" have become buzzwords in Anglo-Saxon economies in recent years and the new Labour Government is now actively seeking to export the concept to the European continent. This is natural, since the very sharp reduction in unemployment in the US and UK during the 1990s, and the equally sharp increase in unemployment in continental Europe, has created a strong presumption that the Anglo-Saxons must be doing something very right, while the continentals are doing something very wrong. This perception partly explains the Prime Minister's lack of immediate enthusiasm for taking the UK into EMU.

Clearly, there is a great deal of truth in the flexibility caricature but, like most caricatures in economics, it does not contain the whole truth. The most obvious problem is that the recent divergence in employment performance between the Anglo-Saxon and continental economies is due at least in part to differences in demand and the economic cycle, and not to the underlying structure of the labour market.

We will not know for some time how much credit for the employment gap should be given to the exemplary monetary policy decisions taken in the last few years by the Federal Reserve and the Bank of England, as compared with the less-than-exemplary decisions taken by the Bundesbank. A definitive judgement on this will need to wait until the present economic cycle is over in both cases. However, the evidence at the moment surely supports the view that old-fashioned demand management, as operated by the respective central banks, carries a lot of the responsibility.

At the height of the Keynesian era, it was common for people to forget entirely about the structure of the labour market, and to place all of the blame for rising unemployment on demand management

errors. It is important not to jump to the opposite extreme in the present enthusiasm for structural solutions for every economic problem. In bald terms, the central banks of continental Europe could have created much more employment, with only negligible inflation risks, by operating with an easier monetary stance, especially in 1994-96.

The caricature about continental Europe also overlooks the wide differences which exist between the individual countries on the Continent. If we strip out cyclical factors by taking the average unemployment in the period from 1983-96, we find that one-third of the population of Europe lived in countries with a lower unemployment rate than the United States. Several of these long-standing low-unemployment economies, including Austria, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and Switzerland, are not usually thought to have flexible labour markets. Meanwhile the UK, with the most flexible labour market in Europe, had one of the higher unemployment rates.

This point is made in an excellent recent paper by Professor Stephen Nickell

of Oxford University (in the *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Summer 1997). He also points out that a "flexible labour market" is not a monolithic concept, but has very many different aspects which apply in varying degrees in individual economies.

A single definition of a flexible labour market, if one had to be coined, would be a market in which wages adjust to eliminate any gap between the supply and demand for labour, so that high levels of unemployment do not persist. But this is clearly not sufficient. Most users of the term would also wrap into its meaning a series of other ideas; for example, that the search process in the labour market works efficiently, so that frictional unemployment is minimised; that non-wage labour costs, such as payroll taxes, are not onerous; that skills adjust in line with changes in technology; and that the structure of unemployment benefits should encourage the jobless actively to seek work.

Features of the labour market which are commonly said to reduce flexibility include high levels of unionisation, legislation to protect workers' rights, restric-

tions on the employer's right to fire staff, requirements to include worker directors on company boards, and minimum wage legislation.

It is immediately apparent that several of the factors which contribute to an inflexible labour market, while in theory damaging to unemployment, may well be desirable from the point of view of other objectives, such as social justice and an equitable income distribution. Indeed, this is how these features of the labour market gained political support in the first place. Their abolition would not be cost-free, certainly not for the politicians involved. Consequently, it is crucial to investigate which of the particular features of an inflexible labour market involve the risk of high unemployment, and which do not.

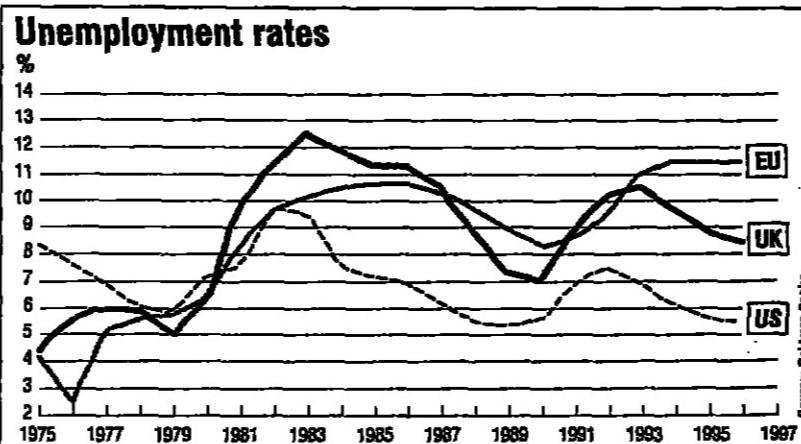
This is where Professor Nickell's paper provides an invaluable service, since he answers precisely this question by performing cross-country correlations which separate the malign features of an inflexible labour market from the benign features.

The elements which Professor Nickell finds to be associated with high unemployment on a cross-country basis include generous unemployment benefits which are not time-limited, wage-bargaining mechanisms where there is no co-ordination between unions or employers, high overall levels of taxation (rather than labour taxes *per se*), high minimum wages for young people when associated with payroll taxes, and poor educational standards at the bottom end of the labour market.

These are the five "employment killers" which Gordon Brown should be focused upon in his European employment initiative. Obviously, they will not be easy to eliminate, but at least they represent a set of identifiable and limited targets, and they happen to coincide very handily with New Labour's domestic economic objectives in the UK.

Even more important, there are several features of inflexible labour markets which are not associated with high unemployment, and which can therefore be embraced for social reasons without doing any real damage. Several of these are quite surprising, such as minimum wages for adults, high standards of employment protection like those which may emerge from the Social Chapter, generous levels of unemployment support which taper down after a few months, and high levels of unionisation, provided that there is a formal system for co-ordinating wage claims among unions and employers. People can legitimately disagree about whether these features are intrinsically desirable for social reasons, but at least they should not be discarded because they cause unemployment.

So what the British government needs to do is to implement at home the benign features of "flexibility", push the Continent to do the same, and forget about the parts that are not associated with unemployment. This will help prepare the UK for eventual EMU membership, though this certainly does not seem imminent following the weekend's press guidance. The Government, having predictably decided against first-round entry, has decided to retain control over the political agenda by unofficially "ruling out" EMU until the next election. By doing this, it hopes to prevent a flood of stories continuously asking whether the time is yet ripe. And the Government can be appear to be dragged "reluctantly" by British business towards membership - a political advantage compared to the alternative of appearing eager for membership, only to be met with vilification from a hostile press. Of course, if it should change its mind and decide to join in a couple of years' time, it can simply summon the press and announce that the situation has changed.



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Endowment mortgage crisis widens

Coopers & Lybrand has issued a stark warning that unless more insurers own up now to shortfalls on endowment mortgages they will face a mis-selling disaster when the policies mature. As Andrew Verity reports, up to a million people are likely to be affected.

The leading accountant said its own analysis of mortgage-related endowments showed companies were charging between 50 and 100 per cent more than policyholders were led to believe when they bought the plans.

While the charges ate into the policies at a much faster rate than assumed, the policies were also likely to grow at a much slower rate than they had until now, the firm said. This is likely to leave hundreds of thousands of policyholders without enough to pay off their mortgages when their endowments mature.

Nigel Masters, head of life actuarial practice at Coopers & Lybrand, said: "All the evidence

so far suggests there is a case that needs to be investigated. Insurance companies must act now if they are going to head off another mis-selling disaster."

"They will need to assess the extent of the problem and put a plan in place to sort it out as soon as possible. Anyone who has an endowment mortgage and is worried about their situation should contact their mortgage company without delay."

The warning follows a revelation that Eagle Star was running into millions of pounds, to top up contributions to endowment policies which looked set to fall short of the mortgage they were designed to pay off.

Coopers, which lists many life insurance companies among its clients, said it was trying to jolt life-insurance companies into pre-emptive action on endowments. Otherwise, the sector would face damaging action from government or regulators when policies matured.

As well as Eagle Star, Royal Sun Alliance and Pearl Assurance have said they were taking action to ensure policyholders knew about the danger of a shortfall. Pearl has written to

Company	Annual growth needed (%)	Deficit if annual growth is 7.5 per cent
Royal Insurance	7.5	0
Allied Dunbar	9.25	£3,800
Commercial Union	8.9	£8,988
Equitable Life	8.5	£9,700
Guardian	8.75	£9,400

The table shows the level of investment growth needed for an endowment to pay off a mortgage of £250,000 with a term of 25 years. If the insurer's investments grow by less than the figure in column two, the policyholder is likely to face a deficit. Column three shows how big the deficit will be if growth is 7.5 per cent a year, taking the company's charges into account.

Source: Insurers' own figures provided in response to an FT questionnaire.

more than 35,000 policyholders, 10 per cent of the 300,000 policies on its books.

Royal Sun Alliance has written to 15 per cent of the 400,000 policyholders who took out low-cost endowments with Royal Life, Scottish Widows and Scottish Provident. Some of these have been informed.

If this pattern is repeated across the industry, more than a million policyholders are likely to be facing a shortfall.

But Coopers & Lybrand fears many other life insurers are too fearful of bad publicity to admit in public that they need to take action. This is despite the fact that many appear to be in

a worse position than those who have taken action.

Many policies have such high charges that unless investments keep growing at a high rate, the policyholders could face a nasty shock at maturity.

While Royal is taking action, most of its policyholders have benefited from good long-term investment growth which has softened the problem with charges. But this effect will be smaller with insurers whose investments have done less well.

Coopers & Lybrand said concern should centre around those offices whose investments had performed less well than the insurers who had admitted

some policyholders would suffer shortfalls (see table).

Industry data shows people who took out policies with Guardian Assurance needed to see investment growth of 8.75 per cent a year if their endowment was to meet their mortgage. If growth was only slightly lower, at 7.5 per cent a year, a policyholder with a mortgage of £250,000 over 25 years would see a deficit of £9,400.

Yet according to statistics specialist Micropal, Guardian's main investment for endowments, its managed life fund, has grown by just 5.9 per cent a year over 10 years. Many Guardian policies were sold by its tied agent, Nationwide, which has expressed concern its investments are growing too slowly.

Industry experts also believe endowments maturing in future will see much lower growth. According to the Institute of Actuaries, growth on with-profits policies is set to sink to half its current level by 2009.

The problem will also be aggravated by the gradual winding-down of tax relief on mortgage interest. This will be reduced from 15 per cent to 10 per cent next year.

Granada moves to counter Brussels' concerns over BDB

British Digital Broadcasting is likely to take action over one of the concerns raised by the European competition authorities.

Cathy Newman reports on efforts by BDB's two partners, Granada Group and Carlton Communications, to get clearance from the European Commission.



Gerry Robinson: May resign from BDB's board

One of the issues that has concerned the European Commission is the crossover of directorships. Gerry Robinson, chairman of Granada, is a director of BDB, the digital television joint venture. He is also chairman of BSkyB, which has secured a long-term programme supply deal with BDB.

One option is that Mr Robinson would give up his seat on the board of BDB to satisfy Brussels' worries.

The Commission is also thought to be looking closely at the terms of BSkyB's seven-year programme supply deal. There has been growing speculation that BSkyB may have to settle for an initial four-year agreement.

Rupert Murdoch's satellite broadcaster originally owned one-third of BDB, but was forced

to drop its stake after the

Commission and the Independent Television Commission (ITC) objected. Granada and Carlton then bought BSkyB's share and split it between them.

BDB will kick off in a year's

time, broadcasting at least 15

channels, in order to receive the

programming, viewers will need

to buy a set-top box, which is

likely to retail at around £200.

It also emerged over the

weekend that the ITC has written to BSkyB about proposals

to cross-promote its pay-per-view service. Several cable companies complained that the satellite broadcaster had threatened to cross-promote its pay-

per-view offering, which will

rival cable operators' services, on BSkyB channels taken by cable subscribers. Cable customers would be tempted to request the BSkyB service, which could undermine the commercial success of the cable companies' own pay-per-view business.

An ITC spokesman said that asking BSkyB for comment followed the usual procedure. "Whenever we get a complaint, we always get the whole story."

Ashley Faull, director of programming at Telewest Communications, the UK's second-largest cable company, said one answer was to substitute other material during BSkyB's cross-promotions of rival services. "Cable companies could opt out of BSkyB's promotion and insert their own material, such as local advertising," he said. "Or they could opt-in with a different promotion for a BSkyB channel which they do carry."

Pay-per-view allows customers to pay to watch individual movies and sporting events. BSkyB, which has in the past focused on pay-per-view sport, confirmed on Friday night that it had signed a deal with Warner Brothers, the Hollywood studio.

A consortium of cable companies has also secured agreement with Warner, and pay-per-view tie-ups with Sony and Paramount are imminent.

Fidelity leads shift into UK life assurance

Fidelity, the world's largest fund management group, has announced plans to set up a life assurance company in the UK.

As Andrew Verity reports, more fund managers are set to follow in a bid to grab a slice of the lucrative market in defined contribution pension schemes.

Fidelity has confirmed it is applying to the Department of Trade and Industry for permission to set up a life insurance company. Up to five other fund managers are expected to follow it into the market within 12 months.

Fidelity's decision adds force to a trend among large fund managers who see opportunities in the UK market. Many expect a sharp growth in the number of defined contribution pension schemes, where benefits depend on contributions and investment growth.

Mike Wadsworth, a partner at Watson Wyatt, who advises on new life company launches, said: "Many large organisations are setting up pensions, such as Price Waterhouse, and asset managers want to be able to provide all the vehicles. The life company structure is the most competitive and flexible vehicle for doing that business."

Foreign fund managers that do not have life insurance arms have been handicapped in competing for new business because they say it is more complicated for them to offer a "one-stop" service to employers.

operate their funds as unit trusts, which incur stamp duty.

The new life insurance companies will allow them to compete directly in the market for stakeholder pensions, a new vehicle for defined contribution pensions expected to be launched by the Government by the turn of the century.

Until now, asset managers that do not have life insurance arms have been handicapped in competing for new business because they say it is more complicated for them to offer a "one-stop" service to employers.

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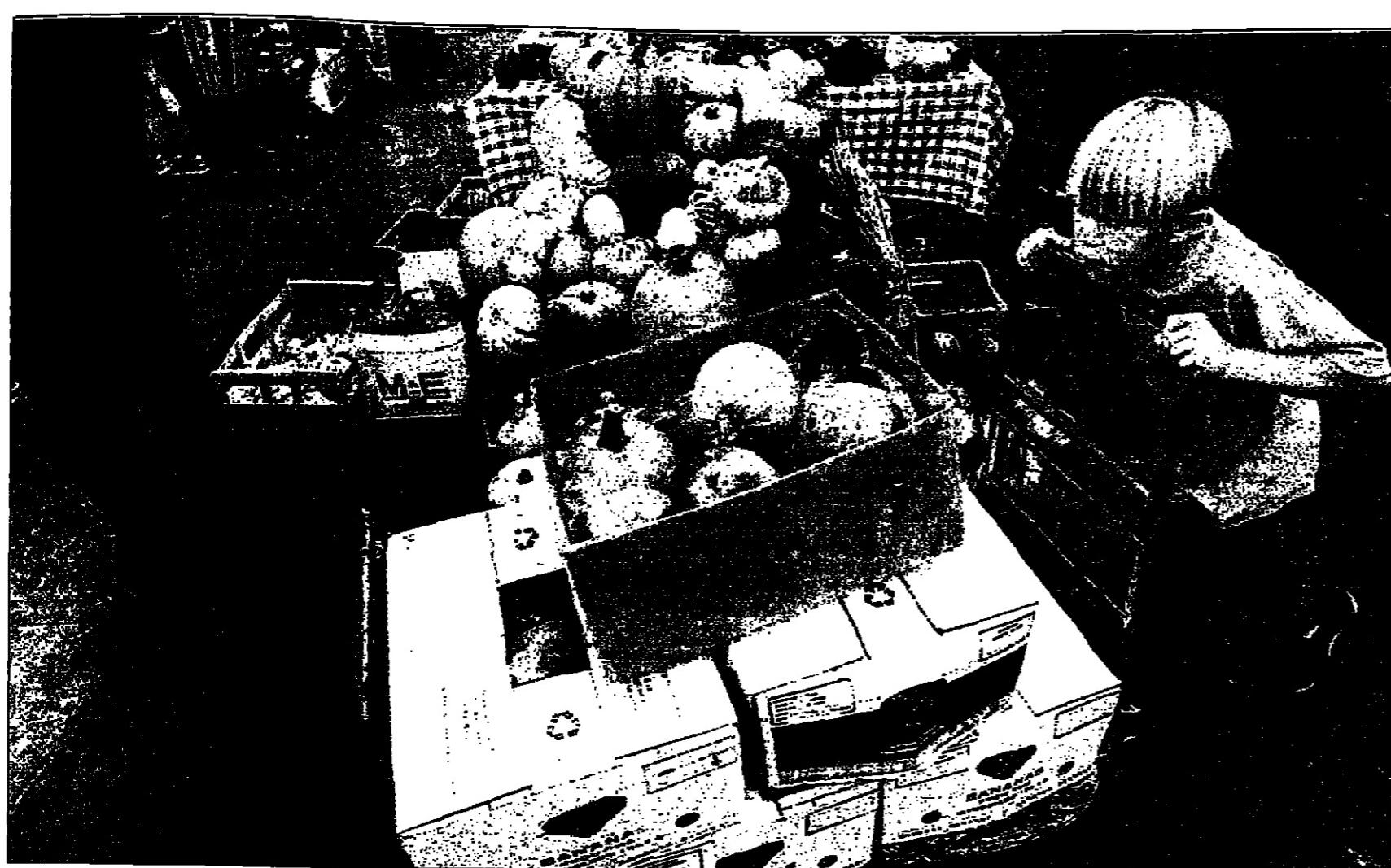
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Getting fresh: Bath's Farmers' Market has revived the old practice of local growers bringing their produce to sell in town. Buyers and sellers (top) can have direct contact, as there is no middle man, and customers can see exactly what they are getting, as with these seasonal vegetables (left and inset).

Photographs: Andrew Buurman

Bath puts the green back into food shopping

A new kind of food market is being pioneered in Britain. If successful it could radically change the way we buy and sell our food. Michael Streeter follows the trail from Rio to Bath.

Piles of carrots, a few bottles of organic wine and slabs of goats cheese may be unlikely ingredients for a revolution, but in Bath they are the start of a new way of shopping. On Saturday the Georgian city held the second of three Farmers' Markets, a concept which is flourishing in the United States.

The idea is so simple that it seems astonishing that these markets are the first of their kind in Britain in modern times. Farmers, producers and craftsmen within a set radius - in this case 35 miles - bring in their goods to a city market area and sell them directly to the public.

There are no middle men, very little transport is needed, and the customer knows exactly what they are getting - and from whom. To ensure all the produce is local, nothing from outside the set area can be sold.

Among the 40 sellers and 4,000 customers at Saturday's City Centre market, there was genuine enthusiasm both for the market pilot scheme and the atmosphere it created. "It's like being on holiday - people are laughing and talking together," said one stallholder.

The belated British attempt to establish the Farmers' Market, which are popular in American cities such as New York, stems from the 1992 Rio Summit. That established Agenda 21, a programme to encourage sustainability, which has been taken up by local authorities under Local Agenda 21. The markets are aimed at creating sustainability within a local economy and reducing the

transportation of products - or "food miles".

The instigator of the markets in Bath is Patricia Tutt, Local Agenda 21 co-ordinator for Bath and North-east Somerset council. "I got the idea from a book," she said. "We had to overcome lots of obstacles, you need licences for just about everything, but because we are part of the council we had a lot of support."

The biggest obstacle, however, came from producers themselves, many of them small-scale business people working hard to scrape a living. "There was an assumption that people would want to buy the produce, but producers were not convinced that taking a full day off would be worth it," said Ms Tutt.

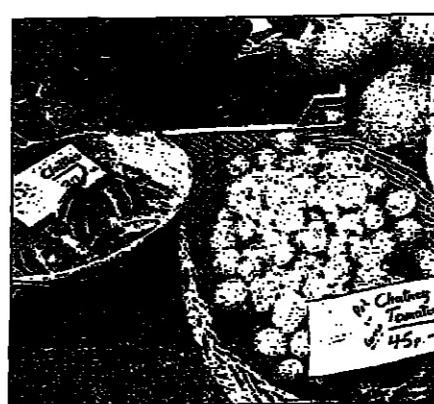
"We had to twist their arms to come - but they were overwhelmed by the success."

Sue Elcock of Special Plants, which grows unusual plants, welcomed the new markets. "It's an attempt to encourage people in Bath to buy things that are produced in Bath. People don't realise what is on their doorstep."

The items on sale so far at the markets include free-range pork, honey, chutneys, mead and home baking. If they are judged successful enough - the last trial market is next month - it will become a regular event.

The Bath experiment has attracted interest from other councils, raising the hope that the Farmers' Markets could one day become as common as they are in the United States, where there are 2,400, including several in Manhattan.

However, the markets cannot survive as quaint tourist attractions subsidised by local authorities. Leeds City Council, which is examining schemes for a Farmers' Market of its own, is undecided. Project manager Colin Mawhinney said: "We are very interested, but it depends on its commercial viability. That is the key issue."



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ACROSS

- 7 Swimmer out of one's depth (8)
- 9 Vocal music he's first to hear (6)
- 10 Worry when head quits it will be different (5)
- 11 Review is heard by new dramatist (8)
- 12 I feel Roseanna is upset about a reprimand (1,4,2,4,3)
- 15 Fugitive very nearly reaching place of safety (6)
- 16 Extravagant display of power is cut out (6)
- 18 Action painting? (11,3)
- 20 Olympic city is home to a Greek girl (8)
- 22 Legally is one of the family (2-3)
- 24 Salt spring (6)
- 25 A member of authority

DOWN

- 1 Take into account everyone round Welsh capital's in favour (5,3)
- 2 Male cast, by the sound of it (4)
- 3 Take notes very quickly (6)
- 4 Reminder about length of lead (4)
- 5 Planned release of French in advance (10)
- 6 Fix match again (6)
- 8 Democratic party's wrong in showing bravado (7,2)
- 13 Work's reduced so becoming easy (10)
- 14 No longer thinking it's too much to pay (8)
- 17 This place of conflict's linked to dead Anglo-Saxon rebel (8)
- 18 Club money added to total (6)
- 19 Low key about one small-minded person (6)
- 21 Bird is in pine nesting-box (4)
- 23 National leaders loved a people's princess (4)

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